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ABSTRACT

This staff development module, written for the caregiver or teacher in a military child care center, provides discussions about caring for infants. The first section concerns fetal development, describing the changes occurring from conception until 6 weeks after birth. Three subsequent sections discuss, in order, the infant from 6 to 16 weeks, from 4 months to 8 months, and from 8 months to 12 months of age. The last section in the module deals with caring for infants in groups. Coordinated with most sections are multiple-choice skill-building exercises which describe situations that have taken place with infants in child care centers, list alternate ways caregivers might choose to handle each situation, and provide feedback on their choices. Additional exercises are provided at the beginning and end of the module for use as informal pretests and posttests. (RH)

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Caring For Infants

Staff Development Series

Military Child Care Project

April 1982

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AND LOGISTICS
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01 APR 1982

FOREWORD

This series of manuals for Child Care Givers on DoD Installations is issued under the authority of DoD Instruction 6060.1, "Training Manuals for Child Care Givers on DoD Installations," January 19, 1981. Its purpose is to provide child care givers with training materials that include the latest techniques and procedures for the safe care and guiding development of children entrusted to their care.

This series of manuals, DoD 6060.1-M-1 through DoD 6060.1-M-17, was developed under the auspices of the Department of Health and Human Services by the Department of Army, in cooperation with the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.

The provisions of this series of manuals apply to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, and the Defense Agencies (hereafter referred to as DoD Components) whose heads shall ensure that the manuals are distributed or otherwise made available to all child care givers on DoD installations and that these materials are used in regional and inter-Service workshops, seminars, and training sessions.

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R. Dean Tice
Lieutenant General, USA
Deputy Assistant Secretary

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Caring For Infants

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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME to a staff development module written for the "caregiver" or "teacher" in a military child care center. Thoughts and ideas for working with babies will be shared with you in this module, *Caring For Infants.*

Self-paced instruction has been used in this module so you can work on your own and at your own speed. As you begin the module we have included a preview of a few situations with choices of ways to handle them that you may try. Read the situation, think about the solutions, then circle the best answer. You may wish to compare your answers with ours on page 192. Since you are just beginning, work slowly. Remember it is the purpose of the module to allow you to practice making some decisions about your actions in working with babies. We recognize that your experiences with infants will be unique. However, actions that have worked for other caregivers may give you some ideas for handling situations that you may come to in the future.

The preview is followed by several sections of discussions about caring for infants. The first section, "What Should You Know About Early Development," is all about fetal development or the growth that takes place before birth. It ends with a description of the baby during the first six weeks after birth. Before an infant enters the child care center at six weeks of age, it is important for you to understand something about the remarkable events that have already occurred. The second section discusses infants from six weeks to 16 weeks or four months of age. Section three discusses infants from four months until they turn eight months. The fourth discusses infants from eight to 12 months of age. The last section deals with caring for infants in groups.

In most sections of this module, situations that really have taken place with infants in child care certers are described. We provide you with choices of ways to handle each situation. Then, when you turn the page, you will find why we think one answer is better than the others. We recognize that often the right answer is easier to choose when a caregiver has the chance to view the *real* situation with the *real* child. Our hope in presenting these study samples is that you have time to think - before some of these problems occur on the job in the child care center.

While the situations cannot cover *all* experiences you might have with infants, the more common or difficult are presented for you to study. It should be noted that solutions presented are not the only possible answers. There are perhaps as many "correct" choices as there are caregivers. This module is a learning tool. It will help you increase your knowledge and understanding of infants. It also will encourage you to think about working with them, and get you to consider the effects of your actions.

At the end of the module you will find another set of situations and ways to handle them. It will be interesting for you to check yourself on what you have learned by comparing the answers you select on the PREVIEW before you read the module with the ones you choose in the POSTVIEW at the end of the module.

This module, *Caring For Infants*, will tell you what infants are like and how you can provide for their needs.

Infants *are* at the age of fastest physical growth.

SO

Infants *need* sound NUTRITION to promote good HEALTH.

Infants *are* born into a strange world.

SO

Infants *need* to feel SECURE.

Infants *are* curious and eager to learn.

SO

Infants *need* to have FREEDOM to move about.

Infants *are* most comfortable when they know the people around them.

SO

Infants *need* a STRUCTURE that provides consistent, familiar caregivers.

Infants *are* brand new to this world.

SO

Infants *need* COMPASSION, love and tenderness.

Infants *are* individuals.

SO

Infants *need* caregivers who respect DEVELOPMENTAL DIFFERENCES in babies.

Infants *are* interested in new things.

SO

Infants *need* CHALLENGE that meet their many stages of development.

Here are the situations with choices of possible ways to handle them which we promised you. Think about each situation and then circle what you believe to be the best way to handle the situation. When you have finished, you may want to compare your answers with ours (see page 192). By doing this, you will have some idea of what you will learn in this module about caring for infants.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF . . .

1. Which statement below best describes the fetus before birth?

   A. The unborn fetus is able to breathe, eat and cry on its own.

   B. The unborn fetus is able to see, hear and touch.

   C. The unborn fetus is helpless. It can do nothing for itself.

2. Gena is three months old. This is her first day at the center. Her mother has told you that Gena is a very fussy baby. She says that no matter what she does Gena just fusses. What might you do to make Gena's day as happy as possible?

   A. When Gena fusses, give her some formula in her bottle.

   B. When Gena fusses, get a fun toy and attract her attention.

   C. When Gena fusses, talk softly while patting her back gently.

3. Shane is five months old. He has been fed, changed and has played for a while. He is beginning to rub his eyes so you feel certain he is ready for a nap. What is most important for you to remember as you get Shane ready for bed?

   A. Change Shane's diaper if needed. Talk softly to him. "First, Shane, I'm going to change your diaper. Then it will be time for a nap." Remove any heavy clothes and put him in his crib to rest.

   B. Change Shane's diaper. Then rock him a bit, perhaps singing a lullaby. When you see his eyes beginning to close, gently walk over to his crib and lay him down on his tummy.

   C. Check to see if Shane's hands and face are clean. Then after getting him quiet, take him to his crib. Tuck him snuggly under the blanket and stay close by until he falls asleep.

4. Nine-month-old Rhonda has always cried often. You make sure she is dry, well-fed and has plenty of rest. Yet when she is awake, things seem to upset her easily. It seems you cannot care for another infant without Rhonda begging to be held. How can you help Rhonda?

   A. Hold Rhonda. Carry her with you as you go from one infant to the next caring for them.

   B. Make sure Rhonda is not ill. Give her some special attention but do not spoil her.

   C. Make certain Rhonda is not ill. If all seems well get her involved with some toys to play with by herself.

5. It is very late in the day and things have been hectic. Just as you think things are under control, Jenny, a ten-week-old infant, spits up all over herself. Another baby falls and bumps his chin on the floor. Then a father arrives to pick up his son, who is sleeping soundly in the crib. What do you do?

   A. Tell the father to go get his own baby since you are busy cleaning up Jenny. Then tell another caregiver to check on the baby who bumped his chin.

   B. Tend to Jenny right away. Ask another caregiver who is free to look after the baby with the hurt chin. When the father arrives tell him you will be with him in just a minute.

   C. Tell the father his son is asleep. Ask him to check the baby who bumped his chin. Explain that you will get his baby as soon as things calm down.

6. Bridgette is seven weeks old. She is an easy baby to care for, but she spits up a little after each bottle. What should you do?

   A. Tell the parents you are worried. Suggest they take Bridgette to the doctor.

   B. Since tiny babies frequently spit up, she probably is all right. However, do watch her closely.

   C. Call the director in to observe Bridgette. This is a matter the director should check.

7. Suzie is just six weeks old. You have never cared for infants before and the sight of this tiny infant scares you. You are not even sure how to hold a baby. What is the most important thing to keep in mind?

   A. Remember that tiny babies love to be held.

   B. A tiny infant needs to have her head supported at all times.

   C. Cradle the infant in one arm.

8. Choose the statement that best describes the appearance of the newborn infant.

   A. Newborns are bowlegged, cross-eyed and wrinkled.

   B. Newborns are chubby, bottom heavy and brown-eyed.

   C. Newborns are lively, awake and alert most of the day.

9. Betty Jo is three-and-a-half months old. She has been coming to the center since she was six weeks old and seems to be doing quite well. You and her mother have become good friends. Today Betty Jo's mother has told you that she and her husband have separated. Since she is upset about the situation she has asked you and the other caregivers to help her out by doing extra favors for Betty Jo. What should you do?

   A. Tell Betty Jo's mother that you feel badly about the family problems she is having at home. Reassure her that you and the other caregivers will see to it that Betty Jo continues to receive the good care that you give to all the infants at the center.

   B. Tell Betty Jo's mother that you understand completely the problems at home. Encourage her to make whatever requests she thinks are necessary to make Betty Jo's stay as pleasant as possible. Let her know Betty Jo is one of your favorite babies.

   C. Tell the mother that all families have problems of some sort or another. Point out that it would be unfair to all the other babies at the center if you give Betty Jo special attention. Suggest that she confide in the center director instead of you.

10. Teddy is eight months old. How can you encourage language in a baby of this age?

   A. Play a hiding game with Teddy. Ask him to pick up objects in the toy box and hide them under a blanket.

   B. When Teddy points to a ball, for example, and says, "Ba, ba," repeat his words as he said it. This is how he learns to imitate.

   C. Play the "naming game." Point to people and things, giving Teddy a name for each. This is how he will learn best.

11. Seven-month-old Randy has a mild diaper rash. He has been through a long teething period and you know such a rash can appear as a result of the stress due to teething. His mother is upset because this is the first rash Randy has ever had. She wants to be a good mother and so asks you to put some lotion she got at the store on Randy each time you change him. What should you do?

    A. Tell Randy's mother that you will be more than happy to do anything she asks to help cure the diaper rash.

    B. Explain that you must have written permission from a doctor to use lotion. Meanwhile, you will change Randy's diapers often.

    C. Remind her that Randy has only a mild rash so there is no need to do anything special. It will go away in a few days.

12. T. J. is almost eight months old. He has been coming to the center for several months. In that time you and T. J. have become good pals. Up until now he has been an eager eater. But lately he has not eaten even half of his usual amount for lunch. All he wants to do is push food around and drop it on the floor. What can you do?

    A. Say, "T. J., good little boys eat their food all up. Show me how big you are and eat some more for me, please." Then smile and praise him as he tries.

    B. Try all kinds of ways of getting T. J. to enjoy lunch more. Make his food look like animals, cars or boats. Babies enjoy fun things like that.

    C. Get in the habit of giving T. J. less to eat at lunch. He is at an age where he may not be hungry for a variety of reasons. If he is not ill do not worry.

13. Ray Jim is four months old. Up until now he has not had any solids. His mother has not had a baby before so has asked your help in getting her son started on solids. She has brought a small infant spoon and some mashed bananas as well as Ray Jim's formula. What is the best way to get the baby off to a good start?

    A. Let Ray Jim nurse from the bottle first, then try a spoon or two of the bananas.

    B. Offer Ray Jim a small amount of bananas on the tip of your finger. Then give him some formula.

    C. Be sure Ray Jim eats some banana before you give him his bottle of formula.

14. Two-month-old Tammy has diarrhea. After having a movement she is in need of a bath and a change of bedding. You feel Tammy should be changed and bathed before her mother arrives. What is the best way to proceed?

    A. Talk to Tammy the whole time. Be gentle as you lay her on a clean towel. While on the towel wash her from head to toe with a warm, damp cloth. Rinse her with a clean one. Dry her gently and put her in clean clothes.

    B. Talk to Tammy while bathing her. Test the water for the right temperature. Carefully put her in the tub, first washing her then rinsing. Dry her, cleaning around her bottom and navel and in her nose and ears with a cotton swab.

    C. Talk to Tammy to make her feel comfortable about having a bath. Test the water first. Then wash her bottom and any other parts that need it. Dry her with a soft towel thoroughly before applying baby powder. Put her in clean clothes.

15. Washington is nine months old. He is crawling well for his age and as a result, gets into all kinds of things. Today he insists he is going to share your lap with a tiny baby you are holding. But you have been having trouble getting the infant quiet and are reluctant to have Washington in your lap at this very moment. What can you do?

    A. Quickly point to a favorite toy of Washington's across the room. Ask him to go get it. Then have him play with the toy by your side.

    B. Say, "Washington, this tiny baby needs all my attention right now." Point to another caregiver close by and say, "Washington, go see her. She will play pat-a-cake with you."

    C. Ask Washington to wait for you while you put the baby in its crib. Then return to Washington and spend some time with him. It would be hard to care for both at the same time.

16. Seven-month-old Marcy is a happy, bubbly baby. Lately, however, she has been going through a fussy stage, due mostly to teething. What might you try to help ease the pain for Marcy?

    A. Wash your hands thoroughly. Then, if Marcy is willing, try rubbing your fingers firmly over her gums. For some babies the pressing feels good on the gums.

    B. Give Marcy a cloth soaked in cold water from the kitchen. She will be able to suck on it or chew on it as she likes. The cool cloth will ease the pain in her gums.

    C. Tell Marcy's father to get some ointment at the store that will help ease the pain. Then you can use it at the center, too, whenever Marcy's gums hurt.

17. Pila, eight months old, has sucked his thumb since he was a tiny baby. His mother has expressed her concern about the thumbsucking on several occasions. She is opposed to using pacifiers and so has allowed Pila to continue to have a bottle even though he can drink from a cup. Today she asks you directly what you think can be done to stop Pila's thumbsucking. How should you respond?

A. Tell Pila's mother that you, too, are very concerned about her son's thumbsucking. Explain that you have read and heard from others that a pacifier does help babies to stop sucking their thumbs. Suggest she try that.

B. Tell Pila's mother that some babies need to suck more than others. Explain that as babies become more interested in the things around them, they often outgrow this need. Meanwhile, it is important that no big fuss is made about his thumbsucking.

C. Tell Pila's mother that Pila probably needs to nurse more and for longer times from his bottle. Explain that in your experience, longer bottle nursing cuts down on the infant's need to suck his thumb. Agree with her feelings about using a pacifier.

18. Nine-month-old Dale is very overweight for his age. As a result he has trouble balancing himself when he sits alone. He cannot bend or reach from the waist very well and he shows no progress in crawling like many others his age. What should you do to help Dale?

A. Discuss your concerns with Dale's parents. Tell them you are convinced if Dale could trim down he would be able to get around easier. Suggest they work on getting Dale to give up the bottle which he carries with him all day.

B. Discuss your concerns with a community nurse. Suggest the nurse talk this matter over with Dale's parents. Explain that his parents insist he have a bottle with him most of the day, not just at nap time.

C. Inform Dale's parents of the observations you have made regarding Dale's physical development. Tell them you suspect his overweight could be keeping him from developing as he would if he were not so heavy. Recommend they consult Dale's doctor.

19. Two-and-a-half-month-old Ruby has fallen asleep in your arms while nursing from her bottle. What should you do?

    A. Carefully remove the nipple from her mouth. Gently, without waking her, put her in her crib.

    B. Thump Ruby on the bottom of her feet to wake her so she can finish the rest of her bottle.

    C. Try to burp Ruby anyway. She might wake up, burp and finish her bottle, then go back to sleep.

20. The older infants are playing in the crawl area. Two babies, Robin and Mike, both ten months old, have gotten into a tug-of-war over a toy. Finally, Robin gets the toy away from Mike. Mike cries because he had the toy first. How can you help the two infants?

    A. Say, "Well, Mike, that's the way it goes. Here, you can play with this." Offer him another toy.

    B. Do not interrupt their play. Babies need to learn to handle their feelings, too. Do comfort Mike if needed.

    C. Say, "Oh, oh Robin. Mike had that first." Then take the toy from Robin and give it back to Mike.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Below are some statements that you may have heard and perhaps agree with yourself. You may have overheard parents of children in the center discuss some of these ideas. However, what seems "common sense" may or may not, in fact, be true. Think about each sentence and put an X in the first column if you agree with it. Put an X in Column 2 if you disagree. The same list will appear at the end of this section.

	Agree	Disagree
1. A fetus in a mother's womb can hear sounds, feel bumps and see light and dark.	____	____
2. The "soft spot" on an infant's head closes by the time the baby is about six weeks old.	____	____
3. It sometimes is good to let a tiny infant cry a while before picking it up so that it won't get spoiled.	____	____
4. Newborns are not able to focus their eyes well enough to identify an adult caregiver or parent until they are about two months old.	____	____
5. By the time a baby is three weeks old it is possible to recognize the difference between its "I am hungry" cry from its "I am sleepy" or "I am wet" cry.	____	____
6. A newborn learns to reach out and grasp objects during the first week after birth.	____	____
7. A four- to eight-week old baby will enjoy looking at a picture book.	____	____
8. An unborn fetus may cry and suck its thumb.	____	____
9. Newborns learn about their world mostly by looking and listening.	____	____
10. Newborns prefer the human face and voice to any other sight or sound.	____	____

IMAGINE THE ENVIRONMENT INSIDE THE WOMB

It Starts With Two Tiny Cells

When does it all begin, this thing called human growth and development? It begins at that magical moment of conception. It begins when a unique, female egg meets an equally unique, male sperm. It is at that moment that these two, tiny cells - the egg, the size of a pinpoint, and the sperm, many times smaller - will combine their two powerful sources of individuality to create a new life. *This new life will be unlike any other.*

And Leaves The Womb As A Fully Developed Infant

It may be hard to imagine two tiny cells, united into one, nine months later producing a wailing, red-faced bundle of energy weighing about seven-and-a-half pounds. That's a lot of growth and development for sure! While you will not know of the infant's existence until the first time you care for him, it is important you understand how much growth and development takes place from the moment of conception until the baby enters the child care center perhaps as early as six weeks of age.

Fetal Development Is Rapid

Three months after conception the fetus is still very, very small. However, if you had a spy glass you could see the sex of the fetus. You could make out parts of the face and head such as the eyes, nose, ears and mouth. In the months before birth, the fetus is able to do many things that may surprise you. For instance, it can swim. The smaller it is the more swimming the fetus does in the water that surrounds and protects it until the day it is born.

The Fetus Kicks, Cries And Sucks In The Womb

Besides swimming, the fetus can move in many other ways. It twists, turns, kicks and even flips over in somersault-like motions. A fetus can cry before it is born, too. While there are no tears or crying sounds, it does go through the motions of crying. It practices for the day when it will announce its arrival loudly and clearly for all to hear. The fetus certainly can touch or feel long before it is born. It feels its face, hands, fingers, feet and toes. It may put a thumb into its mouth, practicing that all-important art of sucking that will be the only way of eating for several weeks after birth. It also can feel its mother's movements during the time it spends wrapped safely inside her body.

It Can See And Hear Inside The Womb

The fetus is able to see. It cannot see as clearly as you, but it can see light and dark. If its mother stands in bright sunshine the fetus can see the light. It is able to hear before it is born, too. The sounds the fetus hears will be greatly muffled by the mother's body. Nevertheless, it can hear a television turned up loud. Loud music coming from the stereo, an auto crash or things that drop with a bang may disturb the unborn. The fetus may jump inside its mother upon hearing a loud sound. A fetus can hear soft noises as well, such as the sound of mother's voice, her heartbeat or her digestive system at work. It can hear her stomach growl when empty or hear a bubble burst if she has just sipped a soda.

The Umbilical Cord Carries Oxygen And Nutrients To The Fetus

Before birth the fetal body does not have to fight the pulling forces of gravity. It is held weightless in a bag of water. The water is always heated perfectly to body temperature. So the unborn never has to experience being cold. Eating and breathing are done automatically through the umbilical cord. From this lifeline the fetus receives oxygen for breathing and nutrients necessary to grow and develop normally until birth. All wastes are removed for the fetus, too. It does not even have to worry about that. The womb is a very safe, secure and relaxing place to be. Leaving the comfortable, cozy atmosphere of that warm, wonderful world is a great shock for every newcomer.

Both Mother And Fetus Are Ready At Nine Months

By the end of the eighth month of pregnancy the mother is getting tired of waiting. As more of her food and energy go to the growing fetus, she is getting more tired physically from carrying the extra weight. Well, as you might expect, the fetus is somewhat impatient, too. Quarters are getting very cramped. The fetus has grown much larger. It doesn't have much room to move around in anymore. It is ready to get on with life but in a new way and in new surroundings.

Birth Is A Shock

The process of birth itself may take from four to 24 hours. Labor and birth are harder perhaps on the fetus than on mother. The pressure, stress and strain that bear down on the fragile, little body are tremendous. It is a rude awakening to suddenly be thrust from a warm, moist, dark and safe environment within to a cold, dry, bright and not-so-safe world outside. No wonder the baby cries as soon as it is born. This starts his active breathing. Within the first few minutes of life the infant must adjust his circulation, lungs, digestion, bowels, urine and body temperature. Before he was born these matters were all performed by his mother's body. Now he is on his own.

Birth Can Be Made Easier For The Infant

There are ways to make the experience of birth itself less frightening for the newborn. Since the infant is not used to glaring lights, some suggest all lights be turned off except a low, soft one - just enough to see by. An infant's hearing is very sensitive, too. An effort could be made to whisper directions between adults and talk in hushed tones to the newborn. Any loud, harsh noises should be removed. A baby responds to touching and feeling from the very start. Every effort should be made to encourage the mother's holding and cuddling of her baby *right away*. Some doctors even suggest putting baby in a warm water bath - like the one she just came from - until her body makes those first, important physical adjustments. There probably are many things adults could do from the beginning to make this world more pleasurable for the new arrival. Due to the energy the newborn puts out during those first few minutes of life, she usually will fall into a deep sleep shortly after birth. In fact she will sleep most of the time - perhaps as much as 20 hours a day - for the first two weeks after birth. This is to be expected until baby recovers from being born and builds enough strength to stay awake longer.

The Newborn Will Never Look The Same Again

Nothing looks quite like a newborn, not even a baby that is two or three days old. The newborn's legs are short and bowlegged. He has puffy cheeks, loose skin and swollen eyes that may look cross-eyed at times. His head may look out of shape. That is as it should be. The bones in the baby's head are very soft. This

softness is necessary. As the infant passes through the birth canal the head is able to change shape - to get flatter and longer - to make the journey easier. His nose may be flattened as well. In a few days baby's head and nose will be back to normal. The biggest soft spot on the top of baby's head will not become firm like yours until he is about 18 months old. His skin may look chalky or pale for a while. This is caused by the protective material that covered his body before he was born. This, too, will soon disappear. His heartbeat and rate of breathing are much faster than an adult's. Baby's body will look top heavy. Actually, it is. His head is about one-third of his body's weight. Imagine *your* head weighing 30, 40 or 50 pounds! This is why baby's head must be supported carefully at all times until his muscles grow strong so he can hold his head up by himself. He most likely will have blue eyes at birth even if they turn green, brown or some other color later. He quite likely will be wrinkled and skinny.

Each Baby Is Different

While newborns have many things in common, each baby is an individual from the beginning. Some newborns will have hair, some will be bald. Some cry a lot. Some cry very little. Some sleep more than others. Some grow faster. Some babies are distracted more easily than others. Others are able to adapt or make adjustments easier. Some babies are more friendly. Babies differ in the amount of holding they enjoy. There are active babies and quiet babies. There are happy babies and serious babies. There are some eager eaters and some not so eager. No two will be exactly alike.

THINK ABOUT A NEWBORN'S REACTIONS AND ABILITIES

Behavior Is Often Automatic

The newborn looks quite small and helpless. In many ways she is. She cannot reach out and touch. She must wait for things to happen, for people to do things or for things to come to her. If an object is put in her hand she will clutch it tightly due to her reflex response. She really has no control at all. It is an automatic response. If her cheek is touched with a nipple, she naturally will turn her head in search of it. She will startle easily if a noise scares her. These and other responses simply happen.

It Takes Time To Know Life Outside The Womb

The newborn has no sense of time. Schedules mean nothing to him. If he feels hungry, he cries. He does not know if the cry came from him or not. He does not know that as the hunger goes away it has something to do with someone's arrival, a nipple to nurse and feelings of comfort. As the first six weeks progress he will begin to put these things together. He will be able to make some sense out of a world that has been rather confusing. At this age he will need to eat perhaps seven or eight times a day. So he will have bowel movements often and need diapers changed frequently.

The New born Is Not Completely Helpless

While the infant is brand new she is not as helpless as people think. She can breathe, swallow and suck. These are very important activities. Without them she would not survive. Sometimes baby may choke or gag until she can put all three of these activities together. It does take some coordination to do it smoothly.

All Senses Are Working

In addition, all of baby's senses are very much at work. He can see, hear, taste, feel and smell. The first few weeks of life for a newborn are ones of fleeting sensations. In a world of light he may frown and close his eyes. White lights cause him to blink. Soft yellow or red lights attract his eyes. He will stare at patterned surfaces longer than plain ones. While he will not be able to focus his eyes for several weeks, he likes things that move. He cannot separate sounds which he makes from those made by others. He does not relate sight and sound. But he does jump, stop moving, cry or turn his head towards a noise he hears.

The Infant Learns Through Touching And Being Touched

For the new infant the feel of something is more important than how it looks, the sounds it makes or how it tastes and smells. The newborn is aware of feelings of pain, a person's touch or temperature changes. Even in the womb the sense of touch is fairly well developed. After birth, touching and feeling are the infant's first way of getting to know her world. Sucking or touching with the mouth is a very satisfying feelings. It is an activity that brings her pleasure and eases her hunger pangs. She also can both taste and smell the milk while sucking. As her body touches her mother's she learns to recognize her mother's comforting arms. Movements such as rocking or carrying are very soothing to a baby. The infant learns to recognize the way certain people hold her. She also learns to recognize

the way people move or walk, their voices or perhaps the smell of their cologne or perfume. But touching still remains most important of all.

Active Movement Develops Muscles

In the first week the newborn wiggles, kicks, and flips his arms and legs in all directions at once. Sometimes he twitches. When put on his tummy he may tuck his body in a ball or spread out in a floppy, rag doll position. His head will fall to the back or front if he is pulled to a sitting position. His eyes are able to look at objects best when they are about eight to 12 inches in front of his face. Any closer or farther away and things are fuzzy.

The Newborn Can Help Protect Itself

The new infant is able to protect herself somewhat. She can turn her head from side to side and cry to get someone's attention. Besides turning her head she is able to move her arms and legs quickly, especially if she is upset because a need has not been met. She can blink her eyes to keep them free of dust. She can curl or tuck her body tightly into a ball to stay warm. The tiny infant has a special ability to shut out noises, lights and other things that would bother most adults. She can sleep in broad daylight, when the stereo is playing or on a very hot, humid day.

Adults Must Watch For Hazards

As the weeks go by, baby will get better at moving his head from side to side and even lifting it off the mattress. It is most important that no large, fluffy pillows or stuffed animals of any kind by left in an infant's crib. Until he is older an infant who presses a nose or mouth against such items could suffocate easily.

The Baby Communicates By Crying

The baby only knows the world as pleasant or unpleasant. She will smile even when just a few days old. At this age she does not smile at people. She smiles when she feels comfortable. She also cries. Crying occurs when she feels uncomfortable. It has nothing to do with liking or not liking you. Crying is the infant's call for help. By the time a baby is three weeks old you can recognize her different cries. She will cry when she wants to be fed, needs a diaper changed or is sleepy. She can cry to be cuddled or rocked. She might cry if she wants to suck on something, has a gas bubble or is sick. She might cry if she is too hot, too cold or her clothes are too tight. Since crying is a tiny baby's way of talking, she generally will cry a lot.

Closeness To Others Means Survival

Some people say newborns are not social. In an adult sense perhaps they are not. But an infant must be social if he is to survive. If he does not cry to eat, to be changed or held, then he misses out on a lot of social contact due to not being picked up and cared for. Thus newborns are born with the urge to cry and get attention. Tiny babies want to be wrapped warmly, held securely, kept clean and comfortable and fed when hungry. While he sleeps about 20 hours a day at first, he is very active when awake. He is most aware of sights and sounds around him. His eyes are very busy looking at the eyes of anyone who holds him. He enjoys looking, listening and being held. Anybody can get his attention for just a few seconds by holding certain shapes before his eyes. That is rather amazing for such a little one who has so many important, new things to handle all at once.

APPRECIATE THE MANY CHANGES THAT OCCUR IN THE FIRST SIX WEEKS

Babies Learn To Trust And Need Adult Attention

The newborn changes a great deal in the first six weeks. The infant learns to trust others to meet her needs. The way people around her respond to her earliest smiling and crying teach her how to use smiling and crying as attention-getters. She learns to feel or show affection for those who make her feel good. However, the first true smile - the "Hi, I see you" smile - usually will not occur until about four weeks of age. The infant also learns to feel angry at those times that are frustrating or unpleasant.

They Learn To Eat And Respond To Adults

Babies may spit up while learning to digest their food. Some babies need different amounts of sucking. This is no different from some adults who need less food and more exercise than others to stay trim. A baby should not be asked to adjust his sucking to an adult's idea of how much he needs or how much is good for him. Upon seeing anyone's face the month-old baby may hush and arch his back expecting to be picked up any moment. When held in position for feeding he will quiet, expecting to be fed shortly. This actually can be seen in very little newborns.

Human Faces And Voices Are Of Interest

Baby loves the human face. Watching peoples' lips and tongues move or their eyes sparkle and listening to their voices are of great interest to a young infant. The month-old baby is able to follow moving objects with her eyes. She shows a liking for new sights over old ones. Yet the human face still is of main interest to her. She will stare at any face that stares at her. If a person smiles, she will smile back. By six weeks of age most any baby will smile at anything that has eyes or looks like a face. It might be a drawing, a picture or a doll. She begins to relate sight and sound to one another. She turns her head to find where a sound comes from. Human voices are her favorite sounds. She knows a certain voice belongs to her mother. She can tell the difference between music that is soft and soothing and music that is loud and unsettling. A light tinkle of a bell will hold her attention for a long time.

Eyes And Hands Begin To Work Together

As weeks go by, the infant gets better and better at getting his hand to his mouth. By five to six weeks he may glance briefly at one of his hands. Up until then his hands were too close for his eyes to be able to focus on them. Some people think a child is blind when they see a newborn uninterested or not able to look directly and follow his own fist. Once the infant's eyes are able to focus on his hand, he will begin to act, not like a newborn, but like an alert, curious child. A baby at four to eight weeks enjoys a book of the right kind. Big, bright pictures held up for baby and talked about will be of interest. It sounds strange - reading to a four-week-old baby - but it is true. A baby of this age has been seen looking at the pictures. He won't know what is being said, so the storyteller can make up the most crazy stories that come to mind. Baby just will be happy to hear a voice, especially if the reader is having a good time, too.

Body Control Gets Better

A month-old infant is more aware of the feel of things, too. Soft, gentle stroking is comforting. A brisk rubbing with a bath towel excites her. If her arm or leg is lightly tickled she will squirm or smile. By the time she is four to six weeks old the baby's movements are no longer jerky. She has more control. A very active one-month-old baby may wiggle around in her crib. She might even worm her way to a

far corner of her bed. The month old definitely has more control of her head. A stronger month old can lift her head off the mattress when lying on her stomach. But the head still needs firm support when the infant is carried or lifted.

UNDERSTAND HOW DEPENDENT INFANTS ARE ON IMPORTANT ADULTS

Adults Should Talk To, Hold, And Play With A Baby

During those first six weeks of life it is important for people to talk to baby. They should play music and sing to him. His legs and arms should be moved up and down, gently, of course. His position should be changed so he can see things in different ways. Sometimes he can lay on his stomach, other times on his back. Infant seats are useful because they give baby another view of the world. Such infant seats should not put baby at too steep an angle and his head should be well supported on both sides. Baby should have touching or feeling experiences. He likes people to blow on his tummy softly or rub his feet and toes. Cradle gyms and mobiles add variety to baby's world. However, adults must be careful not to go overboard with such things. The most important gifts the newborn can receive are a pair of waiting arms, a happy, smiling face and a soft, gentle voice. The infant should be rocked, patted, held and carried often. Infant carriers that hold baby safely and securely against the adult's chest are excellent. When baby is held - especially if he is fussy or upset - his head should be on the caregiver's left side. Then baby can hear the person's heartbeat. This can quiet and comfort a tiny one when nothing else seems to work. A tiny baby never should be left to *cry it out*. An infant who cries is an infant in need. He cannot learn if his needs are not met.

Good Care Encourages Curiosity

The newborn is very dependent on the important adults in her life. The more she is held, talked to, touched and played with, the better baby will feel. If life is pleasant and comfortable this helps her learn about herself and her world. She might not appear to be learning much. But she is learning a great deal. And this is just the beginning. The tiny baby is constantly learning whether she is crying, looking around or being held. The more holding, touching and talking she experiences the more curious she will become about her world.

Parents Have Many Concerns

You must realize by now what a big decision it is when a parent of a six week old decides to seek child care services. As a caregiver you are left with a highly important task. The more you know and are willing to learn about babies the better you can provide for their needs.

You Should Understand Early Development

So you can better meet the changing needs during baby's first year, you now have some idea of what growth has taken place before he came to the center. Reconsider the events of nine months spent inside mother in preparation for what lies ahead. Try to think of the shock of being born into this very different world of ours. Imagine, if you can, those first six weeks of adjustment to a whole new way of living, breathing and eating. A lot has been asked of the newborn. Only months before, he was protected from the chill of the wind, the brightness of lights, and the harsh realities of day-to-day living. Never again in his entire lifetime will he be forced to go through such a major change. No event ever will be quite so drastic or traumatic as being born.

You Have An Important Job As An Infant Caregiver

The life this new person will have depends upon many things. You are one of those things. As one of the infant's main caregivers during her first, important year of life, you will have a great deal to do with how she views her world. Whether she sees a happy place or a sad place has much to do with your care. Whether she feels safe and secure or unsure and fearful depends in part on the quality of caring or loving you are willing to give to her. The giving of love, the giving of a part of yourself, is what caregiving is all about. It requires dedication, hard work and unselfishness. But the rewards are well worth the effort. You will not realize just how great the rewards are until you rejoice at baby's first tooth, recalling some fretful, trying days of sore, swollen gums when she did not feel quite like being her usual, happy, carefree self. Your heart will melt away when baby first smiles at *you* because she recognizes *your* face from all the others. You will feel good inside when she looks with surprise and delight as she suddenly rolls over for the first time or trusts your helping hand as she dares to take her first step.

Many Rewards
Come From Caring
And Giving Your Best

With all these things fresh in your mind it should come as no surprise to you that an infant cries when in pain, when his stomach is empty, a diaper needs changing, or a sudden noise jars him from a peaceful sleep. He needs, wants, likes and loves you very much. Show him you understand by *caring* and *giving* your very best. There is nothing quite like making a baby smile.

HAVE YOUR OPINIONS CHANGED?

Below are the same situations that appeared at the beginning of this section. Read them again and see if any of your answers have changed. Put an X in the first column if you agree with it. Put an X in Column 2 if you disagree. Then turn the page for our answers. The page number(s) tell where the answers can be found.

		Agree	Disagree
1.	A fetus in a mother's womb can hear sounds, feel bumps and see light and dark.	____	____
2.	The "soft spot" on an infant's head closes by the time the baby is about six weeks old.	____	____
3.	It sometimes is good to let a tiny infant cry a while before picking it up so that it won't get spoiled.	____	____
4.	Newborns are not able to focus their eyes well enough to identify an adult caregiver or parent until they are about two months old.	____	____
5.	By the time a baby is three weeks old it is possible to recognize the difference between its "I am hungry" cry from its "I am sleepy" or "I am wet" cry.	____	____
6.	A newborn learns to reach out and grasp objects during the first week after birth.	____	____
7.	A four- to eight-week-old baby will enjoy looking at a picture book.	____	____
8.	An unborn fetus may cry and suck its thumb.	____	____
9.	Newborns learn about their world mostly by looking and listening.	____	____
10.	Newborns prefer the human face and voice to any other sight or sound.	____	____

OUR ANSWERS

1. We agree, see page 19.
2. We disagree, see page 21.
3. We disagree, see page 26.
4. We disagree, see page 22.
5. We agree, see page 23.
6. We disagree, see page 21.
7. We agree, see page 25.
8. We agree, see page 18.
9. We disagree, see pages 22-23.
10. We agree, see page 25.

BE SENSITIVE TO YOUNG INFANTS' ABILITIES

Expect Them To Recognize More Sights And Sounds

At six weeks of age the infant is just beginning to learn to connect sight and sound. He will look in the direction of a sound, searching for the thing that made the noise. While loud noises continue to startle him there are not yet tears in his eyes when he cries. At this stage of development the baby begins to recognize familiar objects. If he sees you bringing his bottle he may stop crying even before he is picked up. He recognizes the bottle and has learned that its appearance means he is going to be fed.

Watch Six Week Olds Discover Their Hands

The young infant of six to eight weeks begins to reach for and bat nearby objects. Gradually she is becoming very fascinated by toys. Her own hand is a most popular "toy." She will glance briefly at her hands. Up until this time her hands were too close for her eyes to see them. They were just a big blur. That is why rattles were not of much interest to baby in the first month-and-a-half. And as the weeks pass she will spend a lot of time staring at her hands and fingers. Baby can follow slow-moving objects with her eyes more easily now. More often than not she will look to one side or the other rather than straight ahead. So objects of interest should be hung on both sides of the crib instead of directly overhead. Baby also looks at the eyes of the person holding her, sometimes sending back tiny smiles at the same time.

Be Aware That Head Control Is Weak At Six Weeks

The month-and-a-half-old infant's batting and glancing at objects are early signs of intellectual behavior. He still is limited by his inability to move around or lack of head control. However, you will be able to see moments of actual learning taking place. He is able to hold his head up for a few seconds at a time, often bouncing or bobbing it up and down. He is better at turning his head or grasping things in his mouth like his bottle or fist.

Notice That They Are Awake More Than Before

By one to two months of age the baby will be spending more time awake than before. She also will be more alert. She will not show many different moods. When she is not sleeping, she is either inactive and quiet just gazing at things or very active and perhaps fussy. She likes to suck and may accidently get her thumb in her mouth. She enjoys looking at lights, being held

and rocked, and listening to your voice and other soft sounds repeated over and over again.

Enjoy Their Smiles At Two Months

At two months of age the infant is smiling at everyone. In fact, he will smile at anything that looks like the human face. That smile of his will make you throw your blues away. Baby's smile is a very powerful force in winning over an adult. You will find yourself wanting to stay by his side constantly entertaining him just to see his smile. It truly is a wonderful feeling when you can make a baby smile.

Respond Quickly To Their Discomforts

The two-month-old infant does not smile all the time. She is able to show signs of rage or anger if she is uncomfortable. If the discomfort continues without relief, she will fuss louder and louder. Therefore, taking care of her needs immediately at this young age is very important. Your quick response develops a sense of trust and feelings of security within the baby.

Watch Them React To Your Attentions

Usually by eight to ten weeks the baby will no longer have digestive upsets that used to be a common event in the early weeks. He is no longer as sensitive to sounds. That is, loud noises are not as frightening as before. When something does scare him he will cry real tears. By 12 weeks of age a baby might respond to your attention with gurgles, shrieks of excitement or perhaps a good, hearty laugh. He is getting much better at reaching for things. With his improved reaching skills he begins to realize that there is a world outside of his own body. Yet he does not know that things exist in their own right apart from the sensations they give him.

Expect Better Coordination Of Hands And Eyes

By now the infant is able to follow moving objects that are as far away as eight to ten feet. She is very good at moving her hands to her mouth when on her back. Her hands are no longer tight fisted with the thumb tucked inside. She begins to focus her whole attention on watching her hands in action. She may hold a rattle for a short time now but you will have to put it in her hand. Her arms and legs are more active, twisting and kicking in all directions. When on her tummy she may make crawling-like motions. While the infant will develop these basic skills without your help, she will develop faster if you are there supporting her and

keeping her happy. For instance, she will learn more quickly if she does not spend too much time in one position or is not left to cry for any length of time.

Encourage Their Interest In Listening

The two- to three-month-old baby will try to "talk." He talks just because he can. If you copy his sounds he may repeat them back again. This is a kind of conversation. He will enjoy it very much. Besides your voice, let the baby hear soft music and other sounds that will interest him. Along with this interest in listening to and making sounds comes the baby's ability to be able to entertain himself. Do not expect him to spend a great deal of time amusing himself. But at least part of the time when he is awake he will enjoy playing with his mouth and tongue, perhaps adding a fist or finger here and there.

Expect Exploration From Three Month Olds

By three months of age baby's favorite toy is herself. Her favorite pastime will be that of self-discovery. Her fingers will explore her eyes, nose, mouth, chin and ears. A very active three-month-old baby might be turning over from her tummy to her back. She will turn her head towards a familiar voice. Her hands are now open for actively exploring things. She can feel the difference between soft, smooth objects and rough, scratchy ones. She most definitely will prefer the soft, smooth ones. She will respond to your paying attention to her since she now is ready for social interaction with everyone.

Give Them Rattles Or Balls With Bells To Enjoy

The 12- to 16-week-old infant will begin to reach and feel with open hands. He will grasp objects clumsily with two hands. He enjoys waving his fists around and watching them move. He will want toys like rattles and balls with bells inside. Toys that dangle are fun, too. He is very interested in his main caregivers. Feeding him may be more difficult now that he moves his arms and legs around so much. Some part of his body is always in motion except perhaps when he is sleeping.

Be Prepared For More Activity

The active baby may be able to roll from side to side. She will enjoy blowing bubbles in her saliva as she drools. She has very good head control, easily following moving objects and turning her head to follow a sound. She might like to sit with support. However, her head will slump forward and her back will be rounded. Near the end of the first four months or 16 weeks she will reach out and actually grab onto objects pulling them to her mouth. Now life really is something to get excited about!

Be Aware That Play Lets Them Practice New Skills

The infant learns about himself and his world through play. He learns to use his eyes and ears. He smells, tastes and feels things. The baby exercises his large and small muscles. He strengthens and develops his tongue and vocal cords in preparation for speech. Most imporant of all, play lets an infant practice what he learns. Whether the infant plays by himself or with his main caregivers, he repeats newly learned skills many times. Something as simple as watching a crib mobile turn or sticking his fist in his mouth are samples of the infant at play. An infant of any age needs quiet times by himself to play with his hands and feet. These moments allow for self-discovery of his body and objects around him.

Encourage Self-Discovery And New Learning

As a caregiver of the infant in the first 16 weeks, you can encourage self-discovery by giving the baby some time to herself. You can help her learn about things, too. Put a simple mobile near the crib for baby to look at. First she will watch it. As she throws her arms and legs she will notice that the mobile moves. Soon she will reach out for the objects hanging from the mobile. By the time she turns three months she probably will have succeeded in batting and hitting the mobile. Wow, does it ever move then! At each step along the way she will practice and practice, until she is able to go to the next step.

Put Toys Within Their Reach

Baby learns to reach for and eventually grab toys or other objects through a similar series of steps. Seeing, reaching for, grasping and putting the toy in his mouth do not happen all at once. At about 12 weeks of age when the infant turns three months old, he shows interest in toys. He already has spent several weeks looking at them. Now he begins to reach for them. You can encourage development by putting a toy within his reach. He may become upset if the toy is pushed out of reach. So return it to a spot where he can touch it. In another few weeks the three to four month old may very well know how to grasp a small toy and pull it to his mouth for closer inspection.

Choose Toys Wisely

For an infant of this age to meet with success, be sure the toy is not too large or heavy for her tiny hands to grasp. Also, toys that are small enough to fit all the way in her mouth are dangerous. One-piece toys with rounded corners and designed

with small and large parts are best. That way she can grasp the skinny neck of a rubber rattle but not get the two-inch circular ends down her throat.

Select Simple Playthings

Playthings for infants in the first four months are very simple. Cradle gyms, crib mobiles and perhaps safe rattles are good. Interesting lights or shiny objects which reflect light fascinate them. Sounds are a favorite. The tinkle of a bell or soft, pleasant music are enjoyed by babies of this age. Infants still will prefer their bodies and yours, however, to most toys. Their hands, fingers, feet and toes always are ready and available. They are small enough to fit part way in their mouths. Yet, obviously, such playthings will not be swallowed or fall out of reach.

Let Them Have Contact With You, Too

Many babies of this age enjoy a mirror close to their cribs so they can watch "the other baby." Infants have fun with their bodies and faces in this way. It is no surprise, then, that they love to look at your eyes and hear your voice. As they grow they cannot resist poking their fingers in your eyes, touching your nose and playing with your mouth. Do not deny young infants contact with you. While they need time to discover their own bodies, they also must have equal time to get to know the important people in their lives. When you cannot hold them at least let them know you are near by talking to them, calling each by name.

Notice Their Enjoyment Of Play

Just how much a baby enjoys play can be seen in the eight week old who kicks while taking a bath or the 12 to 14 week old who coos and gurgles constantly while playing. The fact that the tiny infant will perk up when a new sight or sound is presented is evidence of the baby's great involvement in play and thus learning. The infant is born to learn and through play the baby learns best.

Expect Them To Have Their Fussy Periods

All babies have fussy periods. Even the most happy, cheerful fellow will have his ups and downs. He is no different from you. Such moments will occur at different times with different babies. It may be morning, afternoon or the middle of the night. The infant may be fussing to the point where nothing seems to soothe. Yet, as a concerned caregiver who wants to help, here are some hints.

Try Rocking, Snuggly Wrapping Or Singing To Them

With a tiny infant try *swaddling* or wrapping the baby snuggly in a blanket. Holding her close - especially near your heart - and walking back and forth are good, too. These three ways of comforting a young infant remind her of life before she was born. At that time she could hear her mother's heart beating, feel mother's every movement and did not have a lot of room to move in herself. So anything that brings back memories of the warm, comfortable, safe life before birth often calms a wee one. Gently rubbing or patting her back may be comforting. An infant might enjoy a lullaby. Never mind if you cannot carry a tune. The baby is not a voice critic. She only knows your singing helps her to forget why she is fussing. The traditional rocking in a rocking chair probably always will be a favorite of baby and caregiver alike.

Don't Save Comforting For Fussy Times Only

In trying to soothe the fussing infant, one word of caution. Do not save the singing, patting or rocking just for those times when he needs comforting. Rocking a baby only when he is fussing rewards fussing. It encourages him to fuss just so he can be picked up and rocked. So you need to make a habit of rocking a child even when he is not fussy. Do it just because you know he will enjoy it. In this way you and baby can spend many more pleasant hours together.

Stop Hiccups With A Drink Of Warm Water

Hiccups are not uncommon in babies. Some fetuses have been known to hiccup while still in the womb. Hiccups are caused by bubbles returning from the tummy. In the first few months after birth some babies will have hiccups after most feedings. The hiccups usually will go away by themselves. If not, you often can stop them by giving a drink of warm water.

Recognize That Colic Is Painful

Some babies have *colic*. Colic is a severe pain in the intestines which causes baby to cry. As a result colicky babies are fussy and cry more often than not. Why some babies have colic and others do not is not fully understood. Doctors believe babies that are very active and sensitive are more likely to get colic. Sometimes babies who are handled too much - never having time to be alone - are more colicky. Colic can be caused in some infants by swallowing too much air at feeding. Sometimes a colicky baby cannot tell the difference between colic pain and hunger pains. She will suck and cry as if hungry. Usually a baby with colic will pull her legs up or stiffen them as she cries. She should not be given more milk to drink.

Expect Babies To Outgrow Colic By The Third Or Fourth Month

Babies who are colicky usually outgrow it by three to four months of age. By this time they have learned to swallow better. They discover many interesting things to look at, listen to and touch. So they have more time to themselves. It also may be that those people who care for infants are less nervous now that the babies are older. In general, the infants' bodies reach a stage where the colic just goes away.

Learn Ways To Ease Gas Pains

There are several things you might do to ease the gas pains of colic for a baby. Put her almost in a full sitting position in an infant seat so she is facing a lamp or bright light. This seems to help some colicky babies. Extra burping or slowing down the feeding routine can help reduce the amount of air swallowed while eating. Also, check rubber nipples to be sure they are the correct size. Try standing, holding the baby in a lying position, face down. Put one arm under her chest. Place the other arm between her legs and under her tummy. Gently rub her stomach with your hand. Use any of the ways suggested on the previous page to comfort her. Giving a baby something to suck on like her *own* pacifier or warm water in a bottle may bring relief. Try any combination of the above suggestions and you may find just the right thing for a particular baby with colic. Whatever you try, keep calm. Some babies are colicky only when they are around people who are very active, noisy or upset.

Check Sleeping Babies For Difficult Breathing

Perhaps you have heard of SIDS. This is short for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. It is a strange thing that is less understood than colic. It is the sudden death of an infant occurring in boys more than girls, and more often in winter and spring than summer and fall. Yet it can happen to any infant anywhere at any time. A baby may be perfectly happy and healthy when put down for a nap. Hours or only minutes later he is found dead in his crib. There seems to be no warning or crying. The baby just stops breathing. Since it occurs mostly in babies from birth to four months it does not hurt to occasionally check on these tiny infants while they are napping. If you should happen to see a sleeping baby who has stopped breathing, has very slow breathing and/or whose color has turned bluish, give artificial respiration immediately.

Learn To Give Artificial Respiration

Giving artificial respiration to an infant is a little different from giving it to an older child or adult. Lay the baby on her back. Check the mouth and throat to clear it of any objects or matter. With the head tilted slightly back, cover the infant's *mouth* and *nose* with your mouth. Make an airtight seal. First, breathe into the baby with four short, quick breaths. Then give the baby a new breath every three seconds or a total of 20 a minute, using short, gentle puffs of air. Remove your mouth between each breath. Look at the baby's chest while feeling and listening for air leaving her lungs. Continue treatment until the infant is breathing by herself. Once the baby is breathing normally, keep her awake. Get medical aid quickly. More is being learned about SIDS every day. Until it can be prevented in all infants, your close observations and quick actions could save a life.

TAKE TIME TO LEARN ROUTINES

Support The Head And Neck When Carrying The Young Infant

Unless you have had practice, you may not know how to hold, diaper, feed or burp a baby. When carrying an infant, hold him so his face is towards you, his head and chest near yours. One arm should be firmly placed around and under his bottom so the baby is "sitting" on your arm. The other arm and hand are then free to support the baby's head and neck from behind. As the infant grows stronger, supporting the neck and head from behind will not be necessary.

Change Diapers Often

Diapering is much more involved. Usually a baby is changed before and after eating, before going to bed, after waking up and any time her diaper makes her uncomfortable. A baby's diaper usually is not changed while she is sleeping. Know your center's policies for the handling and storage of diapers. Follow them exactly. Diapers brought by the child's parents should be used only on their baby.

Follow These Diapering Steps

Follow these steps when diapering any baby:

(1) Get everything together. Remove any distractions like toys. Then wash your hands and bring the infant to the diaper-changing area. Tell him what you are going to do.

(2) Gently place the infant on his back on the changing surface. *Never leave the baby alone!*

(3) Talk to the baby as you take off the diaper. If pins are used, put them in a pin cushion or in something safe. Do not put them on the changing surface or in your mouth. If the baby has had a bowel movement, wipe him with a clean part of the soiled diaper. Set the soiled diaper aside - off the changing surface.

(4) Sponge or wipe off the infant's bottom area thoroughly with a washcloth and lukewarm water. Test the water to be sure it is not too hot or cold. Always use a clean washcloth, towel and water for each baby. Let the baby know how nice and clean he is.

(5) Dry the infant gently. Follow your center's policies regarding the use of baby lotion or powder. Remember, baby loves to hear your voice.

(6) Lift the baby's feet. Put a clean diaper underneath his bottom and fasten it in place. If using pins, keep your fingers between the pin and baby's body. If using a disposable diaper, the plastic tabs should fit snuggly but not too tightly. Praise baby for being so good.

(7) Tell the infant you are happy he is dry once again. Put him in a clean, safe place while you return to clean-up the diaper area and wash your hands. Store cloth diapers in a plastic bag marked with the child's name. Discard disposable diapers.

Each step of the way talk to baby. Tell him what you are doing and what will come next. Let him know you enjoy making him feel good all over.

Hold Young Infants When Feeding

For the six-week- to four-month-old infant, feeding is a time for warm, body contact with you, the caregiver. Feeding involves feelings. The infant's first love for you comes from the bottle nursing or feeding experience when you cuddle and talk to her making her feel secure. The main source of food will be milk or a prepared formula. Feeding then is done with a bottle. Infants of this age *must be held* at feeding time. It is very important for the baby to have a lot of touching, cuddling and holding.

Never Leave Them Alone With Bottles Propped

Never, never leave an infant alone with a bottle propped in his mouth. Not only does baby lose out on the feel of your comforting arms and pleasant voice, but it is extremely dangerous! More than one baby has died from choking or drowning in this way. A tiny infant is not able to move the bottle away should too much milk enter his mouth. So for safety and developmental reasons, hold both baby and his bottle. Do not deprive him of this special time when you both can relax. Make feeding a peaceful, quiet time that every baby should have to grow up happy and healthy.

Be Sure Bottles Are Clean And Formula Fresh

Before feeding a young infant wash your hands and gather the things you will need. Bottles, already filled with baby's milk or formula and labeled with the baby's name, should be provided by the parents. Get the bottle ready. Warm it or feed it cold according to the parents' instructions. Also, follow their directions as to how much and how often the baby should be fed. If the formula has been warmed, check the temperature on the inside of your wrist. It should feel lukewarm. Be sure the bottle is clean and unused milk is not reheated for another meal. It is best to throw leftover milk away. Have a couple towels or cloths handy for burping, cleaning spit ups and the like. Choose a comfortable chair - a rocker is nice. Set a mood of rest and relaxation. Then go get baby. Make sure that the infant is wide awake, dry, comfortable and *hungry*. Since a tiny baby will suck whenever anything is put into its mouth, sucking by itself does not mean the infant is hungry. A truly hungry baby will generally fuss along with the sucking.

Let Them Judge When They Are Full

As with all things you do with a baby, cuddle, talk to and show your love for her during feeding. Again, try holding her on your left side so she can hear your heartbeat. Hold her close to your body with her head slightly higher than her tummy. Hold the bottle so the neck and nipple are always filled with liquid. This keeps baby from sucking in air that could make her feel full before she really has had enough to eat. Do not urge her to drink more than she wants. It is a mistake to keep forcing food down a baby of any age. Let her suck, burp her, then try the bottle again. But if the infant is not interested, let her be the judge of whether her stomach is full or not.

Burp Them During And After Feeding

During and after feeding, burp the baby. He must be burped to remove gas or air bubbles that may have formed in his stomach. Burping will help prevent his waking up or feeling unpleasant later on. To burp an infant, put a towel or clean cloth on your shoulder. Hold the baby upright so his head is looking over your shoulder. Or you can sit a baby on your lap with one hand supporting his head, the towel on his lap. In either position *gently* rub or pat the baby's back until you hear a burp. Some babies burp right away while others take awhile. Some will have more than one burp. If you have trouble getting a baby to burp, it might help to lay him on his tummy across your knee.

Put Young Babies To Sleep On Their Tummies After Feeding

If an infant should fall asleep during feeding, try burping her anyway. She may wake up, burp and finish her bottle. If she does not wake up to burp, let her sleep. Most infants will spit up small amounts of milk after eating. This is normal. Since a tiny baby often prefers to sleep on her tummy, this probably is most wise in case she should spit up milk or mucous. Once she can turn over by herself it is safe to lay her down in any position. If, after sleeping a few minutes, the baby should wake up and cry, let him finish the bottle, burping as needed. However, if the infant wakes up shortly after drinking his *full* amount of milk, try to burp and rock him back to sleep or maybe offer a little water rather than more food. Only boiled water brought from home in clean bottles should be used at the center. Do not use a bottle as a pacifier if the baby will go back to sleep without one.

Handle Little Ones Very Gently While Dressing

You must realize that a baby can be injured easily. Handle the baby with care. Dress and undress an infant gently. Allow enough time to do the job carefully. In other words, do not be in a hurry. If you are, the baby will sense it and become upset. Let the infant move while you are dressing her. Do not try to hold her arms or legs absolutely still. You will find that you can slip her arms and legs into clothes even if the baby is moving around. An infant loses body heat quickly. She cannot move fast enough to stay warm when it is cool. Always keep her feet covered. They are the hardest part of her body to keep warm. Remember this simple rule of dress: keep baby clean, dry, dressed for the weather and in loose clothes.

Expect Some Babies To Resist A Bath

Once in a while you may have to bathe an infant. If this should occur, you should know from the start that not all babies enjoy a bath. In fact some want to have nothing to do with a bath. They are frightened by the experience. For one reason or another they are not comfortable in water. So for them enjoying a bath will take time. For babies that are uneasy about being put into a small tub of water, try laying them on a towel. Then you can wash them with a soft cloth, followed by a quick wiping off to rinse.

Always Stay With Them While Bathing

For the baby who enjoys a tub bath, be prepared to get wet. The bath water should be just the right temperature - not too hot or too cold. Test it with a dip of your elbow. About an inch of water is plenty. A clean towel or cloth lining the tub bottom will keep baby from sliding. With one hand under his head and the other holding his legs, carefully put the baby in the tub. Hold him in a slight sitting position, supporting him behind his neck and under an armpit at all times. Whether you give a tub or a towel bath, never leave the infant alone for a moment. This precaution must be followed even if it means whisking a wet infant from the water in an emergency.

Use Soft Cloths And A Mild Soap

A baby may not like a bath because adults often try to clean her nose and ears. Do not attempt to clean a baby's nose, ears, naval or genitals with cotton-tipped swabs. This is unsafe. There is no real need to be concerned about the infant's nose as nature keeps it clean. As for her ears, carefully clean the parts you can see with a

damp cloth. Gently wipe around the naval, her genitals and bottom and other parts of her body. Always start at the infant's head and wash downward, just as you do for yourself. Use no special, perfumed soap. A plain, mild soap is best. Wash her face first without soap, then her head and the rest of her body with soap. Even then, do not use too much soap. Rinse thoroughly. Gently dry the baby all over. If her hair has been washed, be sure to dry it completely, too.

Use Baby Products Wisely

There are good reasons why you must be very careful in the use of lotions, powders, ointments, soaps and other similar products on infants. Many babies have skin that is very sensitive to the ingredients that are used to make these products. Some will have very severe reactions called allergies. The allergic reactions can often be more harmful than the condition, such as diaper rash, that you may be trying to cure or prevent. Infants have been known to breathe in fumes or powder from such baby products causing breathing problems. And there is no need to feel that you have to make baby smell good. Babies have a wonderful, fresh smell all their own. All you need to do is keep them clean and dry. Even if a parent requests, before you use anything on a baby have the permission of your director or a doctor. This is the most safe way to proceed.

Talk To Babies As You Care For Them

While doing any of these routine tasks - feeding, changing or bathing - talk to the infant the entire time. Be cheerful. The infant can sense from your voice and the way you touch him just how he should feel. When you are happy and enjoying yourself he more than likely will enjoy himself, too.

Be Sure They Get Fresh Air Daily

Visits outside should be a part of the daily routine. Babies are healthier if they get fresh air and/or sunshine. Unless it is *extremely* cold or hot, some outdoor experiences improve the infants' appetites and breathing. Such events offer a nice change of scenery, too. Take steps to protect the babies from direct wind, rain or bright sunshine and dress them for the weather. Take them to see, hear, smell and feel the great out-of-doors. One caregiver can accompany three or four infants at a time. Make full use of twin strollers. Put two tiny infants up front and one little one in an infant seat strapped in the back. Or two older infants can sit in the back package area. It will take some planning and

effort on your part. But know that outdoor ventures are excellent for babies. You have a chance to get out of the center, too. If you honestly see the importance of such experiences you will find outdoor time can be made an easy, fun event most every day of the year.

Keep The Sleeping Area Clean And Comfortable

Sleep is one of the most important routine activities for a growing baby. While you are not directly involved with the baby while she is sleeping, there are some things you should consider. The room where baby sleeps should be aired daily. Of course, clean cribs, sheets and blankets are a must. The sleeping area should have mobiles, cradle gyms, patterned sheets on the mattress and contrasting pictures on the walls and ceiling for added interest. Despite what some believe, such items of interest will not prevent the infant from going to sleep. Just the opposite is true. And while she is dozing off to sleep and upon waking up, the baby has something interesting to look at. Keep the room at a comfortable temperature. The baby should be warm but not too warm. Usually light-weight clothing with a light-weight blanket are all that are needed. Be sure the infant's feet are covered as they are generally the first thing that will get chilled. It has been found that some babies sleep better in bassinets or cradles because the space is not quite so large. Laying the infant crossways, then, in a large crib may make the baby feel more secure. Make certain the crib sides are locked securely. Do not bundle the infant tightly for sleeping because he should have some freedom to move.

Recognize Signs Of Tiredness

Regularity in sleeping is important. The infant can accept nap and bedtime more readily when it is something he can count on at certain times of the day following certain activities. Signs of sleepiness typically are rubbing of the eyes and a drooping of the head. An overly fussy baby may be in need of an early nap. A baby who has had too much excitement will tire easily. Often such an infant will wake up in the middle of a nap. If this should happen, calmly and quietly comfort the baby back to sleep.

Expect Tired Infants To Fall Asleep Without Rocking

It is not necessary to get in the habit of rocking a baby to sleep. The infant needs to learn to get herself to sleep. If she is not feeling well, rocking is certainly in order. But as a matter of regular care, rocking a baby to sleep is not

advised. If the infant is kept busy with fun, exciting things to do, she will be ready to sleep when the time comes.

Change Their Positions In Cribs Now And Then

Most tiny babies prefer to sleep on their tummies. It is perfectly fine to put a baby down in the position he prefers. Often the face-down position is suggested in the event the infant should spit up. But if the baby is not comfortable in that position, lay him down however he sleeps best. Do try to vary the infant's positions for sleeping and when he is awake so that he can experience frequent changes. If the baby has hair worn off the back of his head, he has spent too much time on his back. So get him on his tummy more. If he has hair worn off one side or the other of his head, then shift objects of interest to the other side of his crib. Moving the crib itself can help, too.

Let Them Practice Movements On Their Stomachs

While awake give the tiny baby every opportunity to develop body strength and movement. Too many or too tight clothes and covers prevent baby from experimenting with movement. Be sure she spends lots of time on her stomach. Only in this position can she arch her back, lift her head and chest, push up on her elbows and finally straighten her arms with weight on them. This is the only way the infant eventually will learn to crawl. During the first three or four months the baby will spend a great deal of play time in her crib. The crib is probably one of the safest, warmest and most secure places to be. Mobiles and cradle gyms can be attached to the crib for added fun. But once the baby is able to hold up her head and chest, she will learn to roll over, scoot and eventually crawl. By then the infant should be placed on a mat or pad on the floor as long as it is free of drafts.

Find Ways For Babies To Use All Of Their Muscles

You can encourage body development further in the infant by feeding and diapering him equally from both sides. The baby is learning to develop both sides of his body. You can encourage this by presenting things for him to grab in front of him, letting him use whichever hand suits him best. Do not impose your desire for right or left handedness on him. He will develop that preference in due time on his own. You can better help him at this age by getting him to strengthen all the muscles in his young body.

Try Gentle Exercising Games

Exercising games are enjoyed by babies of all ages, so try some with the tiny ones. A rubdown, baby-style, exercises the whole body. Place the baby on her stomach. Using both hands, gently stroke baby from head to foot. Repeat this several times, talking and singing to baby as you go. You can encourage head control by holding baby with her chest above your head, then raise her up and down touching your nose to hers. Arm and hand exercise can be just as easy. With baby on her back, let her grasp your fingers. Then gently raise the upper half of her body off the mat. Leg movement can be encouraged by tickling baby's bare feet and toes briefly. This will get baby to kick her legs about.

Let Them Move Freely While Completely Undressed

If health regulations allow, put the baby on an exercising surface without any clothes on. Be sure to place a flannel-backed rubber sheet under him. When the infant is completely undressed, he is given the freedom of movement that he does not have otherwise. In addition to meeting health requirements in this regard, the room must be at a comfortable temperature so the infant does not get cold. Usually average room temperature works well as long as the infant is indeed exercising.

BUILDING SKILLS
IN CARING FOR INFANTS
SIX WEEKS TO FOUR MONTHS

. . . Some Often Asked Questions
And
Situations To Explore

HOW DO YOU RECOGNIZE INFANTS' SPECIAL NEEDS?

In caring for very young infants make use of your senses of seeing, hearing, smelling and touching. At this age babies need to be looked at carefully and often. Listen for coughing and breathing sounds. You soon will learn the different crying sounds babies make and what they mean. The most common types of crying sounds will tell you when babies are hungry, sleepy or uncomfortable. Pay attention to their cries and try to meet their needs. Your nose will tell you when a baby has had a bowel movement or has spit up. Touching an infant gives comfort and reassurance. It also alerts you to excess perspiration or fever which may indicate illness. Learn what the babies in your care are like. Each personality is different even at this age. Yet the need for loving care and a watchful eye is universal.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

Caroline is ten weeks old. She has been coming to the center for about a week. Today you notice her drawing up her legs and crying. She has been fed, burped, changed and put in her crib, but her cry tells you she still is very uncomfortable. What could you do?

A. Since her needs have been met, she probably is sleepy. She will go to sleep faster if you just pat her back and hum softly to her.

B. Pick up Caroline and place her on her back on your lap. Push on the bottom of her feet while bending her knees up against her stomach. This will help her pass any gas she may have.

C. Pick up Caroline and give her some more milk. She still may be hungry. Be sure to burp her before putting her in the crib again.

Answers On Bottom
Of Next Page

Jason is two months old. He is lying in his crib trying to sleep. However, he has a cold and is having trouble breathing because of thick mucous in his nose. You know Jason is miserable and would like to help him. What could you do?

A. Take a cotton swab and clean the mucous from his nose. Then turn him on his stomach. He probably will go to sleep.

B. There is very little you can do for Jason. Pat him on the back and hope that he goes to sleep. When his mother comes, suggest that she take Jason to the doctor.

C. Take a tissue and wipe away as much of the mucous as possible. Check Jason for fever. If he has a fever or if he continues to be uncomfortable, call the parent.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the best solution. Caroline is drawing up her legs and acting uncomfortable. This probably indicates stomach discomfort. It will not be relieved by patting and humming.

Choice B is a good answer. You are taking actions which could help her pass gas. When young infants draw up their legs, it usually indicates stomach pain due, most often, to gas.

Choice C is not wise. Caroline already has been fed and burped. Feeding her again could add to the problem. She may not want to eat any more if she is uncomfortable or in pain.

Melissa is eight weeks old and has been fed and burped. She has been asleep for a while and you hear her whimper. She has spit up yet continues to sleep. The spit up has a rather strong odor but she seems to feel fine. What should you do?

A. Wipe her face and the bedding. Move her so she is not lying in the spit up. If she appears to be well, allow her to stay asleep.

B. When a baby spits up and the odor is very strong, it means she is sick. Wash her off. Then call and ask the parent to come and get Melissa.

C. Unless Melissa wakes up and begins crying, leave her alone. It is quite normal for a baby to spit up. There is no need to disturb Melissa's sleep.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is a poor choice because you should never insert anything, even a cotton swab, in a child's nose or ears.

Choice B is better than Choice A but you are doing nothing to help Jason.

Choice C is the best response. You have done something to help Jason and are continuing to watch him carefully. Parents should be called when a baby has a fever or continues to be uncomfortable for any period of time.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is acceptable. You need to wipe Melissa's face and move her carefully. She probably will continue to sleep. But you should watch her closely. If the baby spits up many times or spits up a large amount, the parent must be called.

Choice B is not the best idea. A strong odor from spit up does not always mean a child is sick.

Choice C is not a wise decision. If Melissa has spit up she may breathe in some of it which could be very dangerous. You need to wipe her face and the bedding. Move her gently.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SUPPORT YOUNG INFANTS' DEVELOPMENT?

Infants from six weeks to four months sleep a great deal. But when awake they should be given interesting things to look at and listen to. Use brightly colored mobiles with music boxes attached to the crib to entertain them. Talk and sing to them. Holding them, carrying them and rocking them when they are awake helps them feel secure. Pay attention to them during their happy, wakeful hours, not just when they cry. Give the baby a chance to shift positions from sitting in an infant seat to being carried around or lying in his crib. Or put baby on a blanket on the floor. Infants are learning during all their wakeful hours, so vary their positions. Watch them closely for signs of sleepiness. Be sure to give them time to themselves as well as time with you.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF . . .

Sara, who is six weeks old, has been fed, burped, changed and put down for a nap. She has been lying awake contentedly playing in her crib for about 20 minutes looking around and listening to the sounds in the room. What should you do?

A. Since Sara is content, leave her alone to listen to and observe things around her.

B. Put Sara in an infant seat. Move her so she can look at and listen to different things.

C. Move her to a different crib where she can see you and the others much better.

Answers On Bottom
Of Next Page

Steven is three months old. He has been sitting in an infant seat after being fed lunch and diapered. You notice that he has just fallen asleep before you get him to his crib. Should you take any action?

A. Yes. Put Steven in his crib. Even if he should wake he will be more comfortable resting in the crib.

B. No. Do not disturb Steven's sleep. If he becomes uncomfortable, he will wake up and then you can move him.

C. No. Watch Steven. If he begins to wake up move him gently to a more comfortable position in the infant seat.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the best response. After a half hour of contented playing, six-week-old Sara needs her sleep. She probably will fall asleep shortly if left alone.

Choice B is not the best choice. At this age Sara needs to sleep after playing for such a long time. Moving her at this time may make sleep difficult. You could have a fussy baby on your hands as a result.

Choice C is not wise. Sara needs her sleep. Also, infants should not be moved around from one crib to another once one has been assigned to them.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is a good solution. Steven will sleep longer and more comfortably in his crib. You probably can move Steven without waking him. Even if he should wake when you move him, you can comfort him back to sleep. It is not good to let a baby spend a lot of time in an infant seat.

Choice B is not a good idea. If Steven does wake up after being asleep for a while, he may not be able to go back to sleep and will be fussy and unhappy. He will have awakened because he is uncomfortable sleeping in the infant seat.

Choice C will not meet Steven's need for sleep. Infants should sleep in a lying down position. Infant seats are for the infants' wakeful hours.

KNOW WHAT BEHAVIORS TO EXPECT

Expect Four To Five Month Olds To Change Their Own Body Positions

The four- to five-month-old baby will know how to roll over from any position. This newly learned skill will make it possible for him to change his own position any time, any place. For this reason you will not have to be concerned about whether you lay him on his back or his tummy. He will roll over to a new position to suit himself. However, it does mean you must be even more careful than before. Whenever belts, straps, locking sides and the like are available as safety features on infant equipment, they should be used. The baby of this age can flip himself over and out of things, even your arms, very quickly. Once he discovers he has these abilities you must take every precaution to prevent accidents. Since it is impossible to predict the exact age a baby will learn any new skill, always assume from the start that he can do more than you think possible for his age. That way accidents will occur less often.

Watch As They Grab And Let Go Of Objects

Baby will be practicing grabbing whatever she is able to reach and get into her hands. She will begin to let go of things, too. In other words, she will learn that she has some control over how long an object will stay in her hand. At an earlier age she might have grabbed your hair and not have been able to let go at will. You had to pry her fingers apart. But now, you could show her another interesting toy and she would voluntarily give up a hunk of your hair to reach for the new toy. As she gets better at grabbing things, she will spend a lot of time simply passing a toy back and forth from one hand to the other. The baby learns some tricks that annoy adults. She will drop things. You pick them up. She drops them again. She does not know that her latest game may be frustrating for you. She is only learning.

Enjoy Them As They Make New Discoveries

The infant will learn to put her toes in her mouth or blow bubbles in her milk. She pulls herself up in her crib, or uses your leg or the leg of a chair. She learns more complicated cause-and-effect skills. She will hold out her arms to be picked up. She will pull the string on a toy to get it to move towards her. Each new skill brings with it squeals of joy and pleasure. She loves to bounce her whole body up and down. You will notice the beginnings of simple crawling movements, too.

Notice How Busy And Easygoing They Are

The baby of this age is apt to cry very little. He is extremely busy learning so many new skills. He will gurgle, babble and chatter - sometimes softly, sometimes loudly. He will begin to imitate your speech sounds. He will recognize his own name and he also knows other key words like "mommy" and "daddy." He may wave "bye-bye" as you leave. Baby enjoys a book. He will want to feel or touch the pages. He will smile at himself or at you in a mirror. He is a most social person, generally very easy to get along with. But he is realizing some faces are more familiar than others. By eight months of age, he will start to show some reluctance to smile at a total stranger. He truly is growing up.

SUPPORT THEIR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PLAY

Realize The Increased Importance Of Play

From four to eight months of age, play is more important to the infant than it was before. The 16- to 34-week-old infant learns to sit up. Some infants learn to crawl and stand by the time they are eight months old. This is quite a different story than in the first four months. Then baby could not even sit up by himself. He had to be content mostly to watch and listen to life go on around him, waiting for things to happen and to come to him. Finally, he learned to reach out and grab onto things with his hands. That accomplishment marked the height of his physical development in the first four months.

Be Ready For The Exploration That Sitting Up Brings

Learning to sit up and perhaps crawl and stand while holding on are important physical events in the second four-month period. Upon sitting upright with both hands free, the infant enters a whole new way of life. Those fat, chubby hands take full advantage of their new found freedom. Baby is able to throw, clap, wave and drop with her hands. She can poke, push, pull and hit things. She can try her luck at feeding herself finger foods. While learning to sit up she perfects her ability to reach out and grab objects. Her tiny fingers seem to find the smallest things imaginable, like the speck of lint you missed the last time you vacuumed. Baby plays in many ways and with many different things.

Be Aware Of Small Objects That Can Cause Choking

Baby's interest in tiny objects presents some real dangers. All too often adults do not see the little items that a baby will find. And at this age, those small objects usually are put in the infant's mouth. Because an infant is so interested in tasting, chewing and gumming these small discoveries, choking always is a possibility. Should you see a baby choking, here is an action plan to follow at once. Sit the infant on your lap with baby's back facing you. Place the forefinger and middle finger of one hand on the infant's stomach, just below the breastbone. Do the same with the forefinger and middle finger of the other hand. Then quickly press upward. The upward thrust of the infant's diaphragm forces air from the lung. This, in turn, ejects whatever is stuck in the throat.

Give Them Time To Play Alone And With You

As before, baby needs time to play alone and time to play with you. Be sure he has an opportunity for both. Be consistent. Provide time to spend with baby. Then baby will be able to play alone more easily. If you are not consistent in caring for baby when he needs you most, then he will find a way to get your attention whenever he can. At this age attention-getting most often is by crying.

Encourage Exploration By Removing Babies From Cribs And Playpens

An infant should not be left alone in a crib or playpen for long periods of time. Crib play for a few minutes after waking from a nap or putting the baby in a playpen to tend to an urgent matter are acceptable. But far too much use is made these days of cribs, playpens and other baby furniture. They are used to keep baby "out of the way." Such practices prevent baby from exploring or moving about freely. Anything that holds back her natural desire to play also holds back learning. So bear in mind that cribs are for sleeping, playpens for emergencies and high chairs for feeding. They are not intended to take the place of crawling in the baby crawl area or spending time on your lap or in your arms.

Notice Interest In Things That Disappear

At about six months an infant may begin to look for a toy that has disappeared from sight. Even before this age a two- to three-month-old baby will look longingly at a doorway through which you have just disappeared. This probably is the start of the infant's knowing that while he cannot see you, you may return any moment. Of course, if you do, your return is greeted with

glee. If you do not, the infant may pause a moment to stare at the empty doorway, then turn his attention to something else. But months later you can turn the baby's interest in this area into a game.

Play Peek-A-Boo And Other Hide-And-Seek Games Now

Play a hide-and-seek type game. Put a toy under a blanket while the infant is watching you. Then let her find it. In the beginning partly hiding the toy so a corner can be seen works best. This might not be as much fun for you as completely hiding it. But baby will be delighted. She will squeal and bounce with joy as she jerks the blanket off. After she has caught on to the game, then try to cover the toy completely. Playing other games like I-see-you and peek-a-boo also helps infants to learn to remember objects that are out of sight.

Watch How Fingers Help Their Exploration

This is about the stage of development that the infant will poke and pull with his fingers. He will examine objects very carefully. He uses every way he can to learn about things. He chews them, bangs them, squeezes them or throws them. At this point you should begin to give him a few toys at a time instead of just one.

Play Pat-A-Cake To Help Strengthen Hands And Arms

Since the infant is rapidly developing the use of her hands, a traditional game for an infant this age is pat-a-cake. It is an excellent togetherness activity that requires you and baby and no other props. She will not be perfect at first, but that does not matter. What does matter is that you are spending time with her, helping her learn better control of her hands and arms and teaching language besides.

Expect Some Fear Of Strangers, Falling Or Loud Noises

At six to eight months of age the infant may show his fear of strangers and strange objects like Halloween masks. In the early months he had natural, inborn fears. He feared loud, sudden noises or falling. He did not learn these fears. The fears were caused by sensations that disturbed him. Even at four to eight months of age he still is frightened by such events. Falling and sudden noises are especially scary if the infant is dozing off to sleep. He feels insecure or uncomfortable. Of course, that is how all fears make any person, young or old, feel. So in this way the infant is like you.

Protect Infants From Play That Frightens Them

It is part of your job to protect the baby as much as possible from anything that might frighten her regardless of her age. Do not play rough games with her like throwing her up in the air. She will not like the sensation of falling. She does not know that you will catch her. For that matter, you cannot be sure of that fact yourself. Jumping out at an infant suddenly during a game of peek-a-boo could scare her.

Don't Switch Caregivers Often

Switching him from one caregiver to another all the time does not make him feel secure either. At seven to eight months the infant enters a period when he becomes very upset if separated from familiar faces. He has grown enough to be able to recognize his main caregivers from strangers. Strangers do not look, sound or feel the same. After many months of learning, the infant has come to know his world based upon certain, constant people and things. When those things are gone, he naturally feels unsure. So do not be disturbed by his fear of strangers. This is an important event. It is to be expected and shows that the baby has come to trust the key people in his life.

Expect Expressions Of Anger At Times

The infant not only shows her fears more at this age, but she begins to express anger, too. If you prevent her legs and arms from moving about by deliberately holding them down, she will object by squirming and screaming loudly. If she crawls into a box but cannot get out, she may get mad. If you are taking too long to change her diaper, she may run out of patience. She is at an age where she is beginning to assert herself. She has learned over the early months that not all things in her life are beyond her control.

LEARN TO HANDLE COMMON DISCOMFORTS

Recognize The Signs Of Teething

Baby's first tooth appears at about six to seven months of age. But as with all development, there is a wide variation in this. One infant may cut his first tooth at four months while another may not until nine or ten months. Before and after the first tooth appears the infant may drool a great deal. You may want to keep plenty of bibs handy to absorb the drool, keeping baby's clothes dry. As a tooth slowly grows to and through the surface of the gums, the baby will bite, chew and gum everything he can get into his mouth. He may not be interested in

nursing from his bottle as he once was since the nipple pressing on his gums may be painful. He may prefer to bite the nipple rather than suck it. The infant may be fussy off and on during teething months. But this fussiness is not quite the same as being ill. He might cough more often, choking on excess saliva that runs down his throat. Playing with or rubbing an ear may go along with teething. This is especially true of a ten- or eleven-month-old baby when he begins to cut his first molars.

Find Ways To Soothe Sore Gums

Teething rings may help ease the irritation or soreness of gums due to teething. Some are made so they can be chilled. The cold surface helps reduce the swelling and makes baby's gums feel better. Be sure the rings are brought from home and used by only that baby. A baby might enjoy your rubbing a finger firmly over his gums. You will need to wash your hands, of course, before putting a finger in baby's mouth. Be prepared for baby to bite. If she does, calmly let her know you will not allow the biting. Withdraw your finger each time she does try to bite with a firm but gentle, "No." Hard foods may help the infant who likes to bite down hard on something. It also is a nice way to introduce new food. Unless you have permission from the director or a doctor, under no circumstances are you to give the baby any medication. If the parent asks you to give medication, advise the parent to talk to the center director. And, remember, ointments to relieve sore gums are a form of medication.

Watch For Changes In Bowel Movements

Sometimes teething is accompanied by *diarrhea* or loose bowels. Another baby may be *constipated* or have hard bowel movements. Such changes in the infant's bowels should be noted on his daily chart. Diarrhea may or may not be infectious. If it is caused by the stress of teething or a new food the baby has eaten, he probably will not spread the problem to other babies. However, if his bowels are loose and watery along with an offensive odor, then an infection of some sort is probably present. Infections that cause such diarrhea can be spread to others. If the bowels also have blood or mucous in them, or the baby acts droopy, doesn't want to eat, vomits or has a fever, the baby definitely is ill. In either case, the parent should be notified immediately and the infant removed from the center and examined by a doctor. Any form of diarrhea is serious because the infant loses body fluids rapidly. So the infant should receive lots of clear liquids.

Observe Good Health Habits With Infant Diarrhea

Regardless of the cause of the diarrhea, you must observe certain health habits until the parents pick up the infant. Wash your hands, not only after handling the infant's diaper, but also after handling her. Her soiled diapers should be placed in a separate, closed container or plastic bags. Parents also should be advised not to bring the infant to the child care center if diarrhea is present the next morning unless they have written clearance from a doctor.

Note Constipation And Increase Liquids

Constipation is a hard bowel movement or no movement at all. It usually is not serious in infants. In fact, it is normal for some infants to skip days - having a movement perhaps every other day instead. In the early months all infants will strain while having a movement. Some get very red in the face. Whenever an infant does have a hard, dry movement or no movement, it is important to note this on his chart. Constipation can be an early sign of a coming illness. Increasing liquids may help the infant get over constipation. As with diarrhea, any blood passed can be serious. In this event, a doctor's care is important.

Recognize That Diaper Rash Can Be Painful

Diaper rash is another health matter that can go along with teething. Yet, like diarrhea or constipation, diaper rash has many causes and occurs in all ages of infancy. A mild diaper rash may be observed frequently in babies. It is characterized by a fine dotting of red spots in the diaper area. The rash may spread and the baby may be uncomfortable. Severe diaper rash is obvious. The red spots are much larger, often with open sores on the skin. Such diaper rash is painful for the child, especially each time she wets. The ammonia in her urine causes a burning of the skin. The child should be examined by a doctor.

Change Diapers Frequently And Cooperate With Parents

Following the doctor's advice, caregiver and parent must work together to clear up the rash. An effort must be made to keep the baby dry and comfortable by gently changing the diaper. Change wet or soiled diapers immediately. Follow correct diapering procedures as outlined in the previous section. It is most important to keep the baby's bottom as clean and dry as possible. Here, too, feeding lots of liquids can help dilute the ammonia in the baby's urine, thus causing less skin irritation.

BE PREPARED FOR A CHANGE IN EATING HABITS

Offer Solid Foods By Four To Six Months

In the first few months an infant learns to nurse - to breathe, suck and swallow all at the same time without choking. By four to six months of age the baby eats solids. He learns to chew or gum soft foods before swallowing them. When giving an infant of this age solid foods, hold him on your lap whenever possible. Have bibs and towels handy. At first he will not know how to handle the food. It probably will come oozing out of his mouth. If the spoon is put inside the upper lip the infant will suck the food to the back of his mouth. This will help him swallow automatically. In time he will learn to move the food around with his tongue and finally swallow it. As he is learning, do not try to rush or hurry him. He may even try to push the spoon out of his mouth with his tongue, bat at it with his hands or spit. After all, the spoon feels strange. So such reactions are natural.

Let Infants Get Used To New Foods Gradually

Feed the baby solids when she is hungry and feeling good. Mornings usually are best. Let her nu from a bottle first to take away the strong er pains. This assures the infant that she is going to be fed. Then offer the solid food. It should be soft, lukewarm and mild tasting. Prepare only a small amount. If cereal is fed, thin it a bit with some of the baby's formula. Always let the baby get used to one new food at a time before starting another. Two weeks is a good waiting period. If a new food is not eaten, try it again in a day or so. Serve a familiar food baby likes along with a new one. This gives baby something to count on. It also means she will have plenty to eat should she not like the new food.

Don't Worry If They Refuse To Eat

It is a good idea to taste the baby's food yourself, using a clean spoon. Do not use baby's spoon. Check to see if it is too hot, cold, salty or bitter. Reduce distractions around the baby at eating time. Most important, do not force a food if the infant does not want it. Even with foods the baby likes, do not encourage overeating. You should not get discouraged if baby has trouble in the beginning. He needs time to learn to eat solids. You can help baby know what to do by opening and closing your mouth, pretending to eat, too. Talk to him. Make eating one of his happiest times.

Use High Chairs And Finger Foods When They Can Sit Up

Once the baby can sit up at about six to seven months, you can put her in a high chair. Be sure the safety straps are fastened securely and the tray locked. Never leave the infant unattended. At this age the baby becomes interested in finger foods. She has learned how to grab and finger objects quite well. She also may be cutting teeth so gumming and chewing small, semi-soft pieces of food will be soothing to her gums as well as a tasty change for both you and her. Soft meats and cheeses cut into thin strips are good. Small pieces of fresh, *ripe* banana are a favorite. Pieces of toast are fun to crunch. If you are in doubt about a food, check with someone who knows.

Feed Finger Foods After A Few Spoonfuls Of Other Food

Remember, too, regardless of his age, a baby worries if he is not fed when he is hungry. So start a finger food session by spoon feeding a few favorite solids. Then near the end, let the child try a cheese stick or soft cracker. When finger foods are similar in taste to foods the baby has eaten as mashed baby food, he will meet with greater success at feeding himself. And expect him to be messy. Being neat and tidy will not be his main concern at this stage.

Offer Liquid In A Cup At The End Of A Meal

At about six to seven months most babies learn to drink from a cup, gradually giving up the bottle. You can take steps to make learning this new task easier. Be sure the cup is not too large. Bottom-heavy cups with handles are good. Some have removable covers with spouts and holes in them. Such cups are made with a baby in mind. They are easier for baby to handle and can prevent some spilling. At first let the infant play with the cup when it is empty. When you give baby the cup with liquid in it, do so at the end of a meal. She is not too hungry by then. Put only a little to drink in the bottom of the cup. Even a cup that is a third to a half full can be hard for her to handle. Of course, use a liquid that she already likes. This is not the time to try something new. Praise baby whenever she tries even if she makes a mess. Be able to accept small successes in anything you try with her. It won't take long before she will enjoy using a cup. Soon she will learn that it is much faster and easier to get a drink from a cup than in any other way.

Be Relaxed About Bottles

Some people try too hard to get baby to give up the bottle. Others do not try hard enough. If the baby has been given enough other choices and ways of doing things and handling problems, he will outgrow his need to suck on a bottle and prefer a cup instead. So always encourage his interest in a cup. Just don't force it on him, especially when he is not feeling well, is tired or very hungry. This will make baby dislike the cup. If you make the cup seem like a fun thing to have around, he will become more interested in it. Once baby is able to find comfort in your hugs and kisses, drink milk from a cup and can chew and suck on a rubber ring, he really does not need a bottle any longer. When baby reaches this stage, simply get rid of the bottle. You and the infant's parents can work together to make giving up the bottle easy for baby.

Don't Expect Them To Be Tidy Eaters

When the infant is learning to eat solids, to drink from a cup, to crawl around on her hands and knees and to throw things, she sometimes will make a big mess. You probably think warning against slapping hands or spanking bottoms is very unnecessary. But you might be surprised at how many people will do just that, even to a baby that is only a few months old! Some people just do not stop to think about the fact that a baby is not able to understand their directions. With infants you just have to be patient. Realize that the baby does things her way because she is too young to know any better or is not physically able to do it your way yet. A baby is not a neat eater. She does not tell you she needs to go to the bathroom. She does not know a brand new outfit from an old one. She does not mean to hurt you when she pokes her fingers in your eyes. The infant must rely on you and your good example to teach her about things she can and cannot do as she grows. Your understanding and calm, gentle behavior will help her to one day understand and accept responsibility for her actions.

Distract Babies' Attention To Change Behavior

Two of the best ways to control the behavior of a baby are by *distraction* and *substitution*. Distraction is when you turn baby's attention to something new, causing him to forget what he was just doing. If the baby is busy dropping food off his high chair tray onto the floor near the end of his meal, offer him a cup of milk. You can make distraction more effective if you combine it with substitution. When you hand him the cup of milk, quickly remove the rest of the food.

Put it where baby can no longer see it and get to it. This is easiest on you and baby. It keeps everyone happier. To go around saying "No, no" all the time tires you and frustrates baby. Removing an object then putting it back so baby can do it all over again is pointless. He just is learning. He is not "bad" so he does not understand your displeasure.

Remove Temptation And Solve The Problem

A baby is easily tempted by each and every thing around her. She naturally is curious about what something feels like, how it smells or how it tastes. Think about how hard it is for you to control yourself at times. Suppose you have been dieting to lose weight. Someone offers you a piece of your favorite pie. Rather tempting, isn't it? Well, that's how life is most of the time for baby. In the first year of life things which are out of sight are most often out of mind. If the infant cannot see it or hear it she is not really sure it exists. So it is easier to get her to pay attention to something or someone else. When conflicts arise, use distraction and substitution, even if it means picking up baby and moving her to another spot.

BUILDING SKILLS IN CARING FOR FOUR TO EIGHT MONTH OLDS

. . . Some Often Asked Questions
And
Situations To Explore

HOW CAN YOU PROVIDE FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF FOUR TO EIGHT MONTH OLDS?

Babies of this age are fun to watch. Their waking hours are longer. They are reaching, moving and reacting to everyone around them. They are touching everything within reach and are putting things in their mouths. You need to be alert to what items are within their reach. Remember that they can turn over now and may be creeping. In general remove anything that can hurt them. Then let them explore because this is the way they learn. Be alert to symptoms of sickness such as prolonged diarrhea, very strong urine odor or severe diaper rash. These can indicate illness. Short-term diarrhea and minor diaper rash are not unusual. They can be cared for easily. This age group demands more attention from the caregiver than the younger infants. But your rewards are the smiling, gurgling and babbling of happy babies. They are beginning to imitate the sounds they hear, so talking to them is very important. Do not forget that paying attention to the baby during his happy times helps reduce his crying just to get your attention.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF . . .

Garrett is seven months old. Usually he is a happy, contented child, but today he seems cranky and uncomfortable. He is not hungry or wet but still is crying often. What might you do?

A. All babies have their "off" days. Talk to him and give him attention. Do not constantly stay near him. Otherwise he will get too much attention for crying.

B. Everyone needs some extra attention on days when they are not feeling their usual happy selves. Pick up Garrett and carry him for a while. You also could rock him, which would be comforting.

C. Check Garrett for a fever. Also, look to see if he is cutting a tooth. If you find nothing wrong, you could rock him if the fussiness continues.

Answers On Bottom
Of Next Page

Six-month-old Leticia is crying loudly. It is time to feed her. Her mother has sent a jar of vegetables, some soft meat sticks and a bottle of juice. What would you feed her first?

A. Give her some of the juice first.

B. Give her the meat sticks first.

C. First give her the vegetables.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not an acceptable answer. You have not checked to see if there is a reason for his crankiness. You should look for the cause of his behavior.

Choice B will solve nothing. Again you have not checked for the reason for his unhappiness. Just carrying or rocking him will not get rid of a physical problem should one exist.

Choice C is the preferred solution. You are checking for physical causes for his crankiness as well as comforting him.

Edward, who is four months old, comes to the center several times a week. He does not seem to be interested in the mobile above his crib. He does not respond to your voice or those of other caregivers. He quietly lies in his crib most of the time and rarely smiles. What can you do to help Edward?

A. Perhaps Edward is just a little slow in his development. Talk to him often and put him in an infant seat near the other children to arouse his interest.

B. Talk to Edward's parents about his behavior. Ask them to have him checked by a doctor. Tell them he seems slow in development and may have a learning problem.

C. Discuss Edward with the director. Ask him/her to observe Edward. If the director shares your concern, then the director can discuss Edward's behavior with his parents.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the best response because she can get the juice quickly and easily. An ounce or two will take the edge off her hunger. After a couple ounces of juice she will be ready for her vegetables.

Choice B is a poor choice. Leticia will not be able to get enough meat quickly enough to ease her hunger. She probably will become frustrated and cry more. Meat sticks should be given last when she is less hungry.

Choice C, like B, will not satisfy her hunger fast enough. She will be more interested in the vegetables after having a little juice.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is a poor answer. A four month old who just lies in a crib is unusual and probably has a problem which a doctor should check.

Choice B is not the best response. You should have the director observe Edward and discuss the situation with Edward's parents. Telling the parents Edward has a learning problem will upset them. You are not skilled enough to know what the problem is.

Choice C is a better solution. The director needs to observe any child whose behavior seems out of the ordinary. Then the director can decide whether to discuss it with the parents or if other action is needed.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF BABIES THIS AGE?

This age child can play on his own in a safe area for quite a long time as long as there is an adult looking on. If he has toys to play with, he can entertain himself. When you are caring for more than one baby of this age, you can allow them to play near each other. They will enjoy it. Take time to observe the babies and you will notice them examining toys and checking their fingers and toes. Of course, while the baby can be left to entertain himself, it is important that you also spend time playing with him. Talking to the baby and playing clapping games are fun for both of you. Because the baby can move around now, you may find him picking up things or going places that are not safe. The best way to handle this is to take away the unsafe object and give him a safe toy. If the baby is going into an unsafe area, pick him up and move him to a different place and give him a toy to play with. Saying "No, no," or spanking hands will not work because the baby will not understand. Distract him or substitute a toy. Never slap or yell because this is very frightening.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

You have put four babies in the crawl area. They are between six months and eight months of age. They are playing near each other and all seem content. What should you do?

A. There is no need to do anything. Observe their reactions to the toys and each other.

B. Go over to them and bring them close to you. Begin a pat-a-cake game with all four babies.

C. Take one of the babies into another area. Talk and play with her, giving her some private attention.

Answers On Bottom
Of Next Page

You have finished feeding six-month-old Lucy. She is eating some banana chunks, a favorite of hers, from her high chair tray. She begins dropping the chunks on the floor. What should you do?

A. Say, "No, no, Lucy." Give her some more banana chunks.

B. Take away the banana. Give her some toys to drop instead.

C. Give Lucy some cheese sticks. She may like them better.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is a good idea. You can learn a lot by observing children and watching how they play.

Choice B is rather hard because all the babies will not want to play pat-a-cake together. This game is best played with only one baby.

Choice C is not the best choice. You are taking the baby away from playing happily near others. While one-to-one attention is important, so is playing alone and learning around others her age.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the best solution. If Lucy was hungry, she would be eating the banana chunks. She may continue to throw the chunks on the floor, so do not give her more.

Choice B is most acceptable. Lucy obviously is no longer hungry. She should be given something other than food to drop. Keep in mind that babies do enjoy and learn from dropping things.

Choice C is not a good idea either. Lucy probably will try one cheese stick then begin to drop cheese sticks, too, because she is not hungry.

RECOGNIZE THEIR GREATER INDEPENDENCE

Expect Eight To Twelve Month Olds To Be Crawling

The eight- to twelve-month-old infant is a crawling child. It is during this four-month period that the baby probably will learn to crawl. Once he knows how to crawl, he is off at full speed. The world and many things in it are suddenly at his fingertips. Crawling gets him from here to there, an ability he never had before. Getting from here to there also gets baby into things which are not for him and which can be dangerous. So watch his every move. He will be faster than you can imagine.

Be Prepared For A Few To Walk

Crawling leads to climbing, standing alone and finally that first, big step without holding on. While one baby may walk by her first birthday, many infants do not walk until months later. There are good reasons why not all infants learn to crawl, climb or walk at the same age. They each find certain skills that are more interesting or perhaps easier for them than others. One baby may delight in climbing so much that he does not care about much else. Another may be developing her language skills to such an extent that her physical development is just sort of "put on hold" for the moment. She possibly will say her first word. With so much to learn and do, you cannot expect the infant to learn everything at once. This should be kept uppermost in your mind the entire time you are working and playing with babies in your care.

Encourage Exploration And Interest In Books

The infant's interest in books continues to grow with each passing month. Encourage him by reciting nursery rhymes and reading simple stories to him. Of course, interesting pictures and books that baby can handle are a must. He is interested in poking and pulling on things. He can lower himself from a standing position while holding on. He can recognize an object from across the room and crawl to get it. He definitely will develop preferences for things like toys, a blanket or people. He still will explore the nature of objects by inspecting them closely with his eyes and his mouth. And it will be several more months before he will give up tasting everything in sight.

Be Aware Of Normal Signs Of Independence

The baby's independence will become more obvious. She will be reluctant to go to sleep or to have you hold and cuddle her. She will be able to help during dressing and undressing by extending an arm or a leg. She also displays early signs of anger, fear and jealousy. She will protest if you deny her something she wants very much. She may cry out of fear if a stranger stoops to pick her up. She might try to push her way into your arms as you are bottle feeding a tiny baby. Indeed, a lot has happened since newborn days. It is amazing when you stop to consider *all* she has learned in so short a time. Never again in her lifetime will a year see as much growth or learning take place.

Remember That "Averages" Are Just That

It cannot be said often enough: *Averages are only averages*. Do not lock a baby into a set time table as to when he should roll over, sit up, crawl, stand, walk or talk. *Averages* are given only so you have some idea as a caregiver as to what you can expect each step of the way. It can help you identify infants who really do need special care. But as any experienced caregiver will tell you, there are so many, many things that can affect individual development.

Recognize The Many Things That Affect Development

Poor nutrition, not enough sleep, being overweight or lack of opportunity can keep a baby from developing according to the *average*. The infant's sex, family inheritance or cultural background must be taken into consideration, too. For example, it is known that black infants have a faster rate of physical development, on the average, than do other babies. That is, they may sit, crawl, stand or walk earlier.

Be Aware That "Normal" Babies May Walk At Eight Or Eighteen Months

The average is only a guideline. There are babies who have learned to walk at eight months without ever having learned to crawl first. On the other hand, there are children who will not walk until they are 18 months old. That's a range that covers ten months - almost a full year! Each extreme is a long way from the average of 12 months.

Respect Individual Differences

Each baby *is* an individual. You frequently will find infants who will not fit the averages at all. The infant who learns a skill months sooner than the average is not necessarily going to be a brilliant child. The baby who learns the same skill many months beyond the average is not necessarily a slow learner. Allow for

individual differences. Respect each baby for his or her special qualities that make that baby unique and unlike any other child of the past, present or future.

LEARN THE SEQUENCE OF DEVELOPMENT

Below is a list of eight events in infant development. Put them in the order in which they occur most of the time. Think of the average infant, not the baby that is the exception to the average. Put a "1" after the event that would most likely occur first, a "2" after the one that would come second, and so on down the list. The correct order is at the bottom of the page. The pages on which the answers can be found are also given below.

A. Crawls on hands and knees ____

B. Turns head to follow a moving object ____

C. Sits alone without support ____

D. Learns to "recognize" main caregivers ____

E. Takes first step alone ____

F. Stands without holding on ____

G. Reaches for objects with open hands and brings them to mouth ____

H. Rolls over from back to stomach ____

1. D (22) 2. B (33) 3. G (34,35) 4. H (71)
5. C (72,105) 6. A (72) 7. F (105) 8. E (105)

Recognize The Importance Of People In Infant Play

The older an infant becomes the more important play is to him. As with younger babies, the eight- to twelve-month-old infant needs a good balance between playing alone, perhaps around other babies his age, and playing with you. Many toy companies are in the business of selling all kinds of fancy gadgets to be used by baby. While a few of these items may amuse, most don't even do that much. None of them can teach the social and emotional development that comes only from other people. The infant now is better able to seek out and find things to entertain himself. But do not fall into the trap of using baby's independence as an excuse to leave him on his own most of the time.

Expect An Interest In Favorite Toys

At about nine months the infant may have a favorite toy. You should allow the infant a preference for one toy over another. But you should present other toys, too, just so the baby does not depend on having the favorite. After all, there will be times when some other infant will want to play with that same toy. So adding a new toy every so often is a good idea. Around ten to 12 months of age the infant begins to put one object inside another, like small blocks into a tin can. You should make available stacking toys of different colors, sizes and shapes to encourage the baby's interest. In addition to playing games like peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake and I-see-you, you can make up more detailed versions of hide-and-seek. "This Little Piggy Went To Market" is fun at most any age. Just make certain the games are not too advanced for the infant's stage of development.

Give Infants The Name For Things

Play the "naming game." Point to people and things, giving the infant a name for each. Point and say things like, "See the bird" or "Look at the tree." It won't be long before baby will point and try her version of "See the bird." Help baby learn about her own body. Say her name when you ask her, "Where is Sally's nose?" or "Can you find Sally's toes?" These games are fun for everyone involved. While playing with her you teach the baby about herself and others. You can help her learn language, too.

Talk To Infants As You Care For Them

This is a good place to discuss the teaching of language to infants. Everything you do with the baby should teach and encourage language. From the moment of birth the tiny infant listens to those sounds around him and responds to how he is touched. Your voice and the voices of his main caregivers are of greatest interest to him. Whether you are performing simple routines like feeding or diapering, talk to him. There is no need to feel silly when you say, "Hi, how are you big fellow?" to an eight-week-old infant. While it is known the infant does not understand your exact words, he understands much more than you know. Even a tiny baby can detect your mood. Your voice may be happy or sad. It may sound angry or upset, in which case, he, too, may fuss. The infant definitely knows when you laugh and when you cry. A baby is a very sensitive individual. So a rule of thumb is to talk, talk, talk when you are with baby. He never will tire of hearing your voice.

Communicate With Touch As Well

There is no need to wait, either, until the infant is eight months old to play the "naming game." Whenever you talk to any baby, always call her by name. Use your name, too. Describe every move you make as you diaper or bathe her. Keep your voice soft, gentle and happy. Smile a lot. Tickle her, blow on her tummy and nibble her toes. The way you touch her is as much a part of language as what you say. People communicate with each other by the way they look and touch as well as the way they speak. Studies have shown beyond a doubt that the more talking and touching an infant receives from her main caregivers the better. She will learn faster and grow to be a happier, healthier child.

Avoid Babytalk But Repeat Their Sounds

An infant must have correct speech to copy. A baby who hears babytalk will be slower to develop normal speech. Babytalk occurs when you say things like "footsies" instead of feet, or "baba" instead of bottle. If the baby says "baba" when you bring his bottle, say, "That's right. Here is Tony's bottle of milk. Tony loves his bottle." Babytalk is not the same, however, as repeating the baby sounds of a tiny infant. When a two- to three-month-old infant coos and gurgles, this is an excellent time to repeat the sounds he makes. It is very good for a baby to hear his early sounds repeated by others.

Watch Babies Learn To Imitate Sounds

As the baby grows she will realize the game you are playing with her. This will encourage her to imitate others. And through imitation, a baby learns many things besides speech. At about six months the baby begins to imitate your gestures like pointing and handclapping as in pat-a-cake as well as the sounds of speech. So gradually your imitation of the sounds *she made* when she was four months old will make her want to imitate the sounds *you make* when she is six, eight or ten months old. By this time her "baba" should be followed by you using the correct word, "bottle."

Talk Back In Full Sentences

When an infant makes sounds you recognize, talk back to him, making sentences out of the sounds he uses. Tony and his bottle is a good example. When you respond in full sentences, you teach more than language. It tells the baby that the bottle has milk in it. Tony knows that you know how much the bottle means to him.

Make A Game Of Repeating Known Words

By eight to 12 months of age most infants begin to understand the simple words you use. Make a game of this, too. Remember, baby learns best through play. Repeat the sentence the baby understands. Watch to see how she reacts to it. Encourage her response. By this age the infant might be able to use a few words as well as understand what they mean. But you should know that she always will understand more than she is able to say or put into words. Along with using correct speech with infants, keep eye contact with the baby. A baby will pay closer attention to you and what you are saying if she knows you are looking at her.

Be Aware Of Infants Who Are Learning Two Languages

In some homes more than one language will be spoken. Be aware that the infant who hears two languages at home may not speak his first word in either language as early as a baby who is learning just one. While it may take the infant longer to begin to speak words when he is learning two languages, if more than one language is going to be used at home, then the infant should learn both. It probably is less confusing to the baby when one language always is used by one person and the other by someone else. For instance, the German-speaking father should be the one to use German with the baby, and the English-speaking mother should use English.

Find Out About Parents' Language Preferences

Emphasis, however, should be put on the language that the baby will need most as she grows. If you, the caregiver, can speak the languages used by the parents at home, find out from them which language you are to use with their infant at the center. It is best if the baby hears you speak just one of these languages, too. She will learn to recognize you and your voice much easier than if you are switching back and forth. No doubt you are able to speak one of the languages better than the other. The baby's parents should know this, too. If they agree, you should speak the language you know best to their baby. Since a baby learns by imitating those around her, it is better if she has the best examples possible to follow.

PAY ATTENTION TO SIGNS OF ILLNESS

Know Your Center's Policies On Illness

Whenever infants are sick, be sure to follow the child care center's policies carefully. It is important for you to act right away. Infants can become seriously ill very fast. Parents should be called at once when a baby shows signs of not feeling well. Generally, any change in the infant's normal behavior is a clue that he could be sick.

Watch For Changes In Behavior Or Body Functions

A fussy, cranky baby is a good one to watch closely. Look for coughing, sneezing, hoarseness or a runny nose. Any infant who has loose, watery bowel movements may be ill. Movements that are very hard, have a strong odor, a change in color or spots of blood are not normal either. Skin that is pale or bluish, scaly or blistered or broken out in a rash is often a sign of sickness in babies. Twitching in the arms, legs and face, pulling at one or both ears or vomiting are important things to observe.

Many babies spit up while learning to digest solid food. But a baby who spits up or vomits all the time and in large amounts should be checked by a doctor. A normally peaceful sleeper who wakes and cries often could be ill. A child who acts sleepy and uninterested when she usually is active and playful may be showing early signs of sickness. Certainly chilled, flushed or feverish infants quite possibly are ill. A baby who cries as if in pain also could have more

than a bubble in her tummy. With *drop-in* care you might suspect illness when the infant fails to act like other babies her age.

Check Their Temperatures And Tell The Director

Anytime you think a baby may be sick, take and record his temperature. An infant's temperature should be taken by holding a rectal thermometer in the infant's rectum or under the baby's arm in his armpit. In either case only experienced center staff should take an infant's temperature. Under no circumstances should any thermometer be placed in a baby's mouth. Any irregular behavior or symptoms should be called to the director's attention immediately and noted on the infant's daily chart. And remember, if he is indeed sick, the *parents should be alerted promptly.*

Comfort Them Until Parents Arrive

Try to keep the infant comfortable until a parent arrives. If the baby has a fever, you can offer her liquids and sponge her with a cool cloth. You will want to hold her, rocking or walking back and forth. Such motion often makes a baby feel better. The warmth of your body and your gentle touch will be comforting to her. In any event, *do not give any medicine to the infant.* And, when she has gone, wash your hands thoroughly before touching another baby.

HELP THEM TO FEEL SECURE

Recognize That Thumbsucking Is Normal

A baby of any age needs comforting. Sometimes the older baby will turn to an object like a teddy bear, a favorite blanket or his thumb. His need for security is a normal part of development. Thumbsucking is used most often by many infants when they are tired or upset. Not all babies suck their thumbs. Perhaps some need to suck more than others. You can handle thumbsucking best if you see it as a necessary part of infancy for many babies and do not call attention to it. It often is the adult that makes thumbsucking a problem for the infant. Doctors sometimes encourage the use of pacifiers to replace thumbs. However, in group care the use of pacifiers must be watched carefully. They can become a health risk in a center where several babies may be using them if they are dropped and exchanged. For this reason, it might be wise to give babies their pacifiers only when they are in cribs. Generally, babies who are actively involved in a crawl area do not require pacifiers.

Be Patient With Infants Who Suck Their Thumbs

An infant who sucks her thumb a great deal could have something bothering her. She may not be getting enough sleep. She could be upset much of the time by those around her. Perhaps she is not given as much time as she needs to nurse from her bottle. If there is something wrong, you may be able to help. Play with her more when she is awake. Have interesting things for baby to do. Do not hurry her through feeding time. If she finishes her formula quickly, offer her water if she still wants to nurse. Do not leave her alone in her crib for long periods of time before she goes to sleep or after she wakes up. If, however, she simply needs to suck, be calm and understanding. Adults who go around pulling thumbs out of mouths, scolding or making fun are anything but calm and understanding.

Expect Thumbsucking To Decrease As Infants Develop

If you are ever in doubt, remember the following facts: Over 85 percent of infants suck their thumbs. They usually begin sometime between birth and three months of age. The greatest amount of thumbsucking is seen as these infants near seven months. Then there is a gradual decrease in thumbsucking due to an increase in physical development. By 11 to 12 months, most babies have stopped sucking their thumb except in times of upset or lack of sleep, both of which can be reduced by the caregivers around them.

Don't Remove Security Objects

Whether the security object is a thumb, a stuffed animal or a favorite blanket, it should not be removed from the baby. He obviously has a need for it. In time he will outgrow that need if he is given a chance to grow and develop in a healthy atmosphere.

Try To Keep Water In Bottles Used For Comfort

However, if the object of comfort is a bottle filled with milk or juice, this is not so good for baby. A baby who takes a bottle to bed all the time or who packs a bottle with her all day, very likely will have poor dental health. This problem often is called "bottle mouth." Unless the bottle has only water in it, the acid in the milk or juice can cause tooth decay if it stays in baby's mouth for a long time instead of being swallowed right away. Too many times damage to baby teeth means damage to permanent teeth as well. As a caregiver you can do your part.

Help a child become attached to a cuddly toy instead of a bottle. Once her parents know of the possible harm to their baby's teeth, suggest they bring some water in a bottle.

Separate Eating And Sleeping Activities If Possible

If a baby always is held when given his bottle, there is no need to give a bottle when he is put in his crib. It is best he learn that sleeping and eating are two separate activities. Also, baby needs to learn to find comfort in other things and people when he is upset or not feeling well. Offering food to calm him is not wise. The child may very well grow up using food for comfort even when he is not hungry. This can lead to overweight and poor nutrition.

UNDERSTAND THEIR EATING PREFERENCES

Expect Some Foods To Be Unappealing To Infants

By this age a baby is able to show her dislike for certain foods. She may gag. Sometimes the gagging can be prevented if the food is diluted with a little milk or water. She may spit out a new food. Spooning it slowly into baby's mouth may help. Since the baby has been eating some finger foods on her own, continue to encourage her to do so.

Let Them Practice Using Spoons

Baby now will want to hold the spoon himself. However, he most likely will hold the spoon in one hand, using the other hand to pick up food. Do not discourage the infant by taking the spoon from him. Get another one to feed baby. Let him keep the first spoon until mealtime is over. With all this activity going on, be prepared for meals to be quite messy.

Don't Rush And Keep Mealtime Fun

Between learning to eat new foods, finger feeding and holding her own spoon, expect meals to take more time. Do not assume the older infant will finish her meals more quickly than before. Often an adult can make matters worse by urging the infant to eat. Don't try to make her eat. This can upset a baby to the point where she won't want to eat. When mealtime is no longer fun, eating becomes a power struggle between you and baby. You can help the slow eater by allowing enough time for an unhurried meal. Keeping the room quiet and free of distractions makes a big difference, too.

Recognize That Appetites May Be Smaller Now

Sometimes slow eating is due to a lack of appetite. The infant will not feel like eating if he is ill or just getting over an illness. Following illnesses, offer only small amounts of food. Lack of appetite is very obvious when a child is tired or upset. He is not much in the mood for eating then. If he is having difficulty with teething, this can lower his appetite. Even when he is feeling his best, do not expect a hearty appetite. The infant is entering a stage of slower overall growth. He will not be gaining as much weight or adding as many inches as in the first eight months. If he seems happy and content you should be, too. Let him eat as much or as little as he wants. Just realize that a smaller appetite is normal at this age.

CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF LOVE AND TRUST

Let Them Know That You Care

You may ask yourself, "What do I do with a baby all day?" Anyone who has cared for just one infant - let alone several at a time - can tell you it is not hard to keep busy. Generally, as a caregiver you teach baby from the moment she enters the child care center. You teach the infant that you love her. She learns from you that the child care center is a warm, friendly, fun and happy place to be. You let the baby know that you will keep her safe. You teach her these things by holding her close, talking to her, changing her diapers, feeding her when she is hungry, rocking her, letting her sleep when she is tired and playing with her at times when she is awake.

Respond To Their Needs So They Can Trust

When you know that a baby needs comfort, protection, food and rest, that he likes talking, singing and music, that he should have fresh air, a change of scenery and time to play alone, you teach the infant to feel good about himself. When you do this, baby gains confidence in his world. Only when he feels he can trust his world and the people in it is he able to learn. Only then can he give his attention to learning to reach, grasp, sit up, crawl and stand. With your help he learns to talk, laugh and smile, wave bye-bye, build with blocks, feed himself and play peek-a-boo. A world full of trust, love and happiness is most important to the growing infant.

Let Them Follow Their Curiosity

How you teach baby does not always explain how she learns. A baby naturally is curious. She wants to learn from the moment of birth. She learns to recognize important people in her life. She sees, hears and touches. Then she grabs, squeezes, pokes, pulls, pushes and throws. She may chew it, gum it, smell it, hug it or roll it. She does these things over and over, again and again until she knows them by heart. Once she has learned one thing she is ready for something new. Oh, she may come back to it from time to time, but it is never quite as interesting as it was once. As an adult you may think the infant turns away from a task because she is not able to keep her mind on it for long. But probably the opposite is true. A baby has the ability to pay attention for long periods of time as long as the task is fun and interesting.

Notice Their Interests And Avoid Pushing Your Ideas

At times there are too many things in his world to interest and tempt the infant. He may be noisy, messy, slow or clumsy while learning. He may want you there or he may not. Take your cues from him. Whatever you do, be very careful not to over excite the infant. Do not present him with too much all at once. Adults often give the baby too much to play with or too much to do. Give him only one, perhaps two toys at a time. At first, only one toy is best. As his mind and body develop, he gradually will be able to handle two or more. But in the beginning keep it simple. Be able to let the infant play with the toy for as long as he wants. Avoid "pushing" the baby into learning a new game or playing with a new toy before he is ready. Make an effort to match the game or toy to his level of development or interest. A baby of eight or nine months may enjoy peek-a-boo but he might not be ready for a real game of hide-and-seek.

Be Sensitive To Their Moods

Pay attention to the baby's moods. If she is tired, hungry or active, her mood may not be at its best for a quiet game with you. When baby is not in a good mood, it is a poor time to get her to play with you or even by herself. She has needs to be met. She has sleep, food or a more noisy game in mind. Never plan an activity for baby to meet your convenience only. If it is the best time for you and baby, then it is, without a doubt, the best time. She will be most eager when her tummy is not empty, she has had plenty of rest, her diaper is clean and fresh and you are relaxed.

Keep Activities Short

When you decide to play with baby rather than let him play alone, keep the activities short. End an activity when he still is having a good time. If the activity involves a toy, let him continue to play with the toy on his own if he wishes. Be selective. Mix quiet activities with noisy ones. Not at the same time, but alternate them. Baby likes a change of pace. Play pat-a-cake first, then read him a story in a quiet corner. Remember to keep your voice low and soft. A baby does not respond as well to high-pitched voices. This could be due to the fact that his hearing is very sensitive. Until birth, the sounds heard by the fetus were very muffled. The many sounds of the outside world take months, even years to get used to.

Strike A Balance Between "Alone" And "Together" Activities

Sometimes it is not easy to know when a baby should play alone or when you should become involved. One thing to look for is a good variety or balance between "alone" and "together" activities just as you look for a balance between quiet and active ones. Do not feel badly if a particular infant seems to prefer much more "alone" time than another. A baby learns much about her world when given time to look, listen and think by herself. She will have much more patience than you at putting the same shape in the same hole again and again. Long after you have tired of pat-a-cake she may have another half hour of play in her.

Expect Some Conflicts

When infants play in groups, particularly six-to 12-month-old babies, there will be moments when conflicts occur. Conflicts will occur between two infants or between an infant and an object. You will have to use your good judgment as to what situations require your involvement and which are best left for the infant to solve by himself.

Let Infants Solve Some Of Their Own Problems

As the infant moves about, be nearby to observe and help as needed. Talk to the infant or infants if there is a group of them. Verbalize what is going on. Do not praise or criticize. Just describe their activities for them. "I see Carry likes the soft, pink bear. Allan likes it, too. Allan wants to take the stuffed bear from Carry. Carry is crying because she cannot hang on to the bear. Now Allan has the bear." This is an example of how you can stand back, observe and describe. In this situation, there

is no real need for you to step in. Many adults would be tempted to take the bear from Allan and give it back to Carry. Some adults would go a step further and scold Allan. If two babies get in a tug-of-war over a toy, you are wise to let them be. You should not solve all their problems. Give them the freedom to explore.

Be Gentle If You Do Step In

If an infant comes to you for comfort, give it to her. But unless she asks for comfort or is very upset, a *little* fussing is not a serious matter. Let her learn to solve such feelings herself. In situations that involve hair pulling, biting or poking, you will need to get involved. But do so with gentleness. You teach gentleness by being gentle with both infants. You can substitute a toy for the hair pulling or poking.

Give Them A Chance To Learn Problem-Solving

When an older infant learns to solve some of his own problems, it strengthens his self-respect. He realizes he has control over events in his life. If he crawls up into a sofa but cannot get down, don't feel you must rush to his aid at once. Again, describe what is happening for him. "Bobby is crawling over to the sofa. Bobby is climbing into the sofa. Oh, oh, Bobby wants down. Bobby doesn't know how to get down. I wonder how Bobby will get down from the sofa?" If you wait and watch, Bobby just may figure out for himself how to slide out of the sofa. There is no need to help him unless he becomes upset or frustrated. If you are willing to make a game out of it, Bobby might enjoy the challenge. Should you decide to help him, do not do it all for him. Show him how to turn around, extend his feet downward, then help him slide to the floor. He then may very well climb right back into the sofa only to try the sliding trick himself without your help.

BUILDING SKILLS
IN CARING FOR INFANTS FROM
EIGHT MONTHS TO ONE YEAR

. . . Some Often Asked Questions
And
Situations To Explore

HOW DO YOU MEET THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF THIS AGE GROUP?

The baby from eight months to one year often attaches himself to one caregiver if he is at the center everyday. He also has a strong attachment to his parents, especially mother. He will cry when mother leaves and may want to be comforted by one special caregiver. It is important to remember that this is natural. It is a sign that the child is beginning to develop one-to-one relationships. These babies also may become attached to a special toy or blanket. They will want this item for comfort when they are feeling tired or cranky. They make their moods known quite clearly. When they are angry, their faces become red and they howl loudly. When they are unhappy, they sob and hiccup sadly. When they are happy, they will bounce up and down and wiggle all over. They play alone for longer periods of time but still need play time with the caregiver. Singing songs, playing games and just talking to them are all very necessary at this age.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF . . .

Chris is nine months old and has been coming to the center for several weeks. Whenever he is put down to play by himself he howls and turns red with anger. He stops as soon as you pick him up. How do you handle this in the future?

A. Carry Chris around with you. Show him the different areas of the room. Once he stops crying, put him down. Repeat these steps as often as needed should he start to cry again.

B. Give Chris a toy to play with. Stand by to talk to him and pat his back. When the crying stops, walk away. Return to his side should the crying begin again.

C. If Chris is feeling fine try to interest him in a toy or other activity. If he continues to cry, simply leave him alone for a short while.

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Of Next Page

John is a ten month old who has cerebral palsy. He is an easy child to care for and is content to lie quietly in his crib. His mother says he does this at home also. How should you care for John?

A. Allow John to lie in his crib if he is happiest this way. Check him for wet or dirty diapers every hour and follow his regular feeding schedule.

B. Talk to, smile at and hold John as often as you would any baby his age. Encourage any reactions he has or sounds he makes. Learn as much from his parents as you can about John's condition.

C. Treat John as you would any handicapped child. Put him in the crawl area when other children are not there to hurt him. Remember, you cannot expect John to be like the others.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not a wise choice. Carrying Chris around is just what he wants. He will take you away from your duties to the other babies. He probably will scream each time you put him down.

Choice B still is not the best solution. Chris is used to being held a lot. Even with a toy or pats on the back, he will scream when you walk away. You cannot keep running to his side.

Choice C is the best response because you have checked to be sure there is nothing wrong with Chris. Also, you have tried to get him involved with a toy or activity. By finally walking away for a little while you are letting Chris know his anger will not take you from the other babies. This is hard to do, but it is best for Chris. He will gradually learn to play for longer periods by himself. However, if Chris cries for an extended period of time, something else must be done.

Janine is nine months old and loves to play with a red ball in the crawl area. If another child takes the ball from her she screams and cries until she gets the ball back. She grabs it from other children and plays only with the ball. How can you, the caregiver, help Janine?

A. Get another ball for the other children to play with. That way Janine can have the red ball and everyone will be happy.

B. When Janine screams for the red ball, give her another ball. Or give her some red stacking rings. Show her how to stack them. Try to interest her in other toys.

C. When Janine screams for the ball, put her back in her crib. She soon will learn she has to play with other toys and cannot have the red ball all the time.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the poorest choice of all. You are not attending to John's emotional needs. John needs loving attention and holding just like any other child.

Choice B is the best answer. You are helping John grow emotionally and intellectually by touching him and talking to him. It is important to understand as much as you can about John's handicap. You can get this information from his parents if you show them you care about John. Do not push for information, however, if they seem unwilling to share it.

Choice C is not acceptable. John does have a handicap but he should not be deprived of playing near others his age. Learn as much as you can about John from his parents. Observe him carefully to see what he responds to. Encourage his responses through smiling and touching.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A will solve nothing. You are not helping Janine learn to play with other toys or being fair to the others.

Choice B is a good thing to try. You are trying to interest her in other toys while allowing others to play with the red ball. It may be the color red Janine likes, so the red stacking rings may catch her attention. This will take time and patience, but will be most helpful to Janine.

Choice C is a very poor idea. You are not teaching Janine anything. She will not understand why she is being removed from the crawl area. You are punishing her rather than helping her.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF EIGHT TO TWELVE MONTH OLDS?

Babies from eight months to 12 months are really on the move. They are crawling and climbing. They are learning to play with blocks and stacking toys. They like to put things inside other things and take them out again. They experiment with pulling themselves up and walking while holding on to something. Toys which babies can crawl over, under and through teach them about various levels. Near the age of one year, the baby may be saying simple words like "ma-ma," "da-da," or "ba-ba." Encourage this by saying the words back to them - "mommy," "daddy," and "bottle." You can begin to teach body parts by pointing to your nose, eyes or mouth and saying, "Here is my nose." Point to baby's nose and say, "Here is Johnny's nose." Give this age group room to move around. Play with the babies. Show them how to stack blocks or pyramid rings. They soon will be imitating your actions. You will need love and patience to keep up with these active infants, but it is most rewarding and fun to watch them grow.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF . . .

Ten-month-old Rosa chatters to herself and others all the time. She can say many sounds. You know she almost is ready to say words. What should you do?

A. Repeat the sounds she makes. Point to the objects she is playing with and say the sound she says. Example: If she says "ba" for ball, you repeat "ba."

B. Wait until she says a word you understand and then say, "Good girl, Rosa, you said 'bot-bot'." Speak her language even if it is babytalk.

C. When Rosa says a word you understand, repeat it. Example: If she says "ba" for ball, you smile and say, "That's right, Rosa, it's a ball." Show her toys and tell her their names.

Answers On Bottom
Of Next Page

A group of ten and eleven month olds have been throwing stacking rings and blocks all around the carpeted crawl area for some time. You are watching them. What could you do to support their development?

A. Let the children be. Take this time to sit off by yourself and catch your breath.

B. Without saying a word get a spindle and some rings. In full view of the babies quietly begin to put the rings on the spindle.

C. Since the infants are playing well together, see if you are needed elsewhere.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the best response. You are not giving Rosa the correct word. Instead, you are encouraging a sound that is close to the word but still not correct.

Choice B is a poor solution. This would encourage babytalk. Rosa needs to hear the correct way to say a word.

Choice C is the best choice. You are helping Rosa learn the correct way to say words and praising her attempts to talk.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the best response. Since they have had time to themselves, you could be doing something to help the infants learn a new skill. You should rest on your break - not when you are caring for the infants.

Choice B is a good idea. Without interrupting their fun, you are showing them another way to play with the rings.

Choice C will not help the infants learn anything new. Someone needs to stay in the crawl area with the babies.

EXPECT PARENTS TO BE CONCERNED

Recognize A Parents's Difficult Position

As suggested earlier, the decision to bring a baby to the child care center is not an easy one to make. Sometimes parents have no choice if jobs require separation from the infant. This is most true of careers in the military. As a caregiver you surely will meet some parents, especially first-time parents, who want you to give their child extra care. They will expect you to pay special attention to their child, follow their instructions to the letter and keep them informed of all events that take place involving their child.

While parents sometimes can make what seem to be unreasonable demands on you as a caregiver, try to understand their feelings. It is not easy to turn a child over to a child care center for part of a day or night. It even is harder if the child is a tiny infant. Parents know that many caregivers may be inexperienced in caring for children, particularly infants. They know that when you care for more than one baby there is a greater likelihood of their baby not being fed on time, not being changed when wet or not being held as needed. These are things of real concern to all good parents.

Put Yourself In Their Shoes

Try to see things from their point of view. Ask yourself just how you might feel if you were asking them to care for your baby. If you are very young and inexperienced - perhaps you are not yet a parent - it will be very hard and at times impossible to fully understand the worries and concerns that parents have. In the meantime, it would be wise to stop and think why parents make such requests of you and other caregivers in the center. No one can blame them for wanting the best care possible for their baby while they are at work or gone for a few hours. And giving the best care possible is what your job is all about.

BE PREPARED TO MEET A LOT OF NEEDS AT THE SAME TIME

Caring for a group of babies can be a real challenge. Because infants have needs that must be met immediately it can be very tricky figuring out just how to feed, change or hold three of them at once. At times you will wish you were an octopus just to have enough arms to go around!

Feed The Youngest Babies First

When caring for infants in groups there will be hectic times. There will be moments when you will ask yourself, "Why me?" It is during these times that your understanding of infant development can help. Since you know a six-week-old baby will not wait to be fed, it is best to arrange the schedules so youngest babies are fed first. This way the tiny ones are fed, changed and burped by the time the older babies are ready to eat. Putting the young babies in infant seats after they are fed and not ready to sleep may help. They will enjoy watching while you feed the others.

Expect Some Infants To Enjoy Being Held More Than Others

It is true that babies enjoy being held by you. But this does not mean you must hold them all of the time. That would be impossible for you and certainly not in baby's best interest, either. You will need to find a happy medium. It also will help you to identify those babies who need more holding as well as those who don't enjoy it as much. Caregivers often feel bad when some babies in their group require extra attention for one reason or another. They feel that they tend to neglect the more independent babies. You should not feel this way. Be glad that some babies are more independent. Be glad, too, that some are more dependent, otherwise, you would not have babies to cuddle!

Learn To Recognize Individual Differences

Learn to recognize the infant who would rather play with a toy than sit on your lap. As long as she is happy and having a good time, there is no need to feel you are neglecting her. You must be doing things right or else she would not be content. If she needs or wants you, she will let you know in a big hurry. Take advantage of her independent nature and give your time and

attention then to the baby who is more dependent. He will appreciate your attention more than the one who would rather not be bothered with you at that moment.

Respond To These Differences

That's how babies are. Some will want your attention more than others. That's how people differ. As adults, those babies who wanted more of your attention will want the companionship of other adults. Those babies who were independent will, if they have been allowed to be themselves, grow up to be independent adults. Being independent or dependent cannot and should not be labeled as good or bad. It varies according to the situation. It is simply how people are. What is important is that you need to see these natural differences in the babies you care for so you can better meet their individual needs. That is your job. When you observe children and accept the differences in them, you will be providing the best care possible.

Think Of Creative Ways To Meet Their Needs

Because babies are individuals with their own separate moods, it is most unlikely that they will all be awake or need a diaper change at the same time. But during those times when many babies have needs that just won't wait, there are things you can do to help reduce the confusion. You could call for the help of volunteers or even the director. Such people can be of great help for five or ten minutes until you and the other caregivers have a chance to get things under control. If there are some older school-age children available, they can help by holding a baby - with your supervision, of course. While holding a baby for feeding is best, on hectic occasions you could give an older infant his bottle as long as you are sure he is able to handle it safely by himself. Stay close by should he need help. These are times when you may need to use a playpen for those babies who can entertain themselves for a few minutes. This will keep them safe while you have to leave them to tend to another. Likewise, if all a tiny infant needs is the comfort of your warm body, then use an infant carrier or sling that holds her close to you. This frees your hands to help some other baby. If you notice you suddenly find yourself in charge of

several babies under six months, then make a switch with another caregiver who has only older babies. This evens the workload and is the only fair thing for all concerned - caregivers and babies alike.

COOPERATE WITH OTHER CAREGIVERS

Recognize The Importance Of A Few Special People

If a baby is raised part of the time in a group setting, this will have an effect on what that child becomes. Everything that happens in a child's life has an effect upon him. This is obvious. That is why infants especially need the consistency of being cared for by only a few special people in their lives. In this way they can relate better to their world and learn about it. They learn trust and develop close attachments. Often babies are willing to explore and learn only when those certain, special people they know and feel comfortable with are in the room.

Try To Develop One-To-One Relationships With Infants

Therefore, if a baby is brought to the child care center on a regular basis, it is most important that the same person be her main caregiver while she is there. This is what is called *a one-to-one* relationship. The baby will not be upset by having to relate to a new face, a new voice and a new touch everyday. That would be confusing for the baby. It would make her feel unsure and insecure. The idea of a one-to-one relationship in infant care is not as difficult to carry out as you might think. If you believe that it is important and must be a goal to work toward, you will find a way.

Cooperate With Other Staff In Caring For All Babies

Some caregivers define one-to-one as meaning they are not responsible for other children in other situations. Caregivers sometimes may notice a child needs changing and fail to do it. Or they tell the child's caregiver it needs doing. The same thing may occur with a baby who simply needs to be held. Also, caregivers fail to play with other babies when an opportunity presents itself. They claim, "Well, I am not responsible for that baby. That job belongs to Sharon. She cares for Tiffany, not me."

What happens is that the caregiver lets the child play alone or unsupervised rather than giving the baby and the baby's caregiver the support they need.

Get To Know All Of The Babies In Your Room

If such things are allowed, they destroy cooperative behavior among caregivers. Also such matters do not allow children the opportunity to be around other adults. While it is important for infants to have the same caregiver as much as possible, there will be times when this will be impossible. If the regular caregiver is absent for whatever reason, other adults need to know a child somewhat so they can substitute. It is easier for both the substitute caregivers as well as the baby if they know one another even just a little bit.

Give Them A Chance For "Alone" Activities

Babies are quite capable of and actually are very much interested in "alone" activities. Much of baby's learning takes place when he is by himself. You can have "alone" activities with babies in groups. While the babies may be all together in one area, they each can be very busy at a different activity. One baby may prefer to lie on his back in his crib batting at the cradle gym and babbling to himself. Another may want you to rock her and sing a lullaby while a third may be happy to sit in his high chair snacking and looking around.

Expect Infants To Do Things At Different Times

Do not think you will spoil a young baby if you hold her to stop her crying. In fact, just the opposite is true. Those infants whose needs are met and whose cries are responded to are infants who cry less and less as the months go by. They will be the babies who will learn to become interested in other things besides you. They are the ones who will find the world has more interesting things to do than to spend time on your lap. Only when a baby knows you will be there to meet her needs will she have the confidence to explore and try things by herself. You can spoil an infant if you do *everything* for her. So let her learn to do things for herself. Let her be free to learn about the world.

Think Safety First

Safety is especially important for young children. Babies are active, curious and into everything, particularly when they start to crawl. They have no sense of danger. They are able to get into things and places they couldn't reach before. It is your job to provide the protection and supervision infants need for maximum safety.

Let Them Know What Is Dangerous

The importance of safety and accident prevention cannot be overemphasized. Therefore, an occasional "No, no" when appropriate and well-timed helps baby recognize those things that she cannot do. As long as you do not overuse the "No, no," you are wise to let the infant know when she is exceeding the limits which you can allow. Follow through by removing the object or the baby. Using a stern, firm voice is important, too. Baby will understand your meaning better when you quietly yet firmly let her know her behavior is not acceptable. Gradually the infant will learn that a no-nonsense tone in your voice means business.

Explain Or Show Them What You Mean

Explain to the infant why you are saying "No" or stopping him from doing something. You may think this is silly or pointless with a baby. It is not. It is good practice for you. It gives the baby something to listen to - your voice and your words - while you keep him from whatever he should not be doing. Take this time to teach the baby the correct way to handle something. Instead of tearing the pages in a book, show him how to turn the pages carefully. You will be surprised just how much an infant can learn by your example when given the chance.

Let Them Explore When It's Safe

Whenever you must restrict infants' movements, do so only when it is in their best interests. Do not limit exploration because it is an inconvenience for you or may mean a little extra effort on your part. Caring for infants means your willingness to put forth that extra energy and time. For instance, allowing the eight-month-old baby the freedom to get her hands into her food at mealtime is perfectly normal and acceptable. Sure, it will mean a messier tray and face to clean up, but baby is learning. There really is no danger involved. However, refusing

to let the infant play in her soiled diaper is important because health and safety matters are of concern in that case. So use your judgment. Protect the infant when necessary. But allow her the freedom to explore within reasonable safe limits.

Notice Each Infant's Behavior And Progress

Part of your job is observing children. The older the infant becomes, the more things you will be able to notice in his behavior and development. Watch the infant who is crawling and beginning to climb and stand. Look closely at how he moves his legs, knees, hips and feet. When problems are discovered at this age, they usually can be corrected quite easily. All it takes is your awareness and observations each day to pick up developmental and behavior problems in children. Following are some specific things for you to look for in babies of different ages.

Look For Signs Of Illness And Disabilities

In babies under six months, watch for extreme fussiness and crying, lack of head control or excessive choking or vomiting while feeding. Note infants who do not pay attention to things they should be able to see or who are unable to follow an object with their eyes. Also, look for babies who do not react to medium or loud sounds, who do not seem to recognize the familiar voices of their main caregivers or who stop babbling. In infants six to 12 months of age, watch for little interest in or attempts to sit up or try simple body movements. Observe them for awareness of sounds, little or no interest in looking at, reaching for, picking up or playing with toys and little or no reactions to others, especially their main caregivers.

Be Alert To Problems With Vision Or Hearing

While infants with handicaps can cover a very wide range of conditions, those related to sight or vision and sound or hearing are most common. When baby is very tiny, hearing and visual problems are not easy to detect by just observing. At that age the baby uses her senses of seeing and hearing separately. At about four months of age she will start to put all her senses together as she explores her world. She won't just see, hear, touch, taste or smell things using each sense one at a time. These senses will go hand-in-hand now. An infant born with a visual handicap, such as a congenital cataract, will put the senses together at four months, too,

with the exception of sight. If she is observed closely and the visual handicap is detected, the condition often can be corrected through surgery and glasses at a later date. Even then the child will not be able to identify objects by simply looking at them. She will need to taste, smell, touch and/or hear it first, then gradually through the combination of using the other senses, be able to visually identify the object.

Watch The Four Month Old Who Stops Babbling

Similarly, a baby can be checked more easily for deafness or hearing loss at about the fourth or fifth month. A deaf baby will begin to babble at about the same time a hearing infant does. Therefore, deafness is not as easy to discover as you might think through simple observation. What you should make special note of is the four-month-old infant who, having started to babble, suddenly stops babbling. Despite his deafness the infant started to babble because of the feelings his babbling created. For the normal baby the sounds his babbling makes and the feelings created go together, so he will continue to babble. But the deaf or hard-of-hearing infant gives up babbling because the pleasant sensation of sound is missing.

Remember That All Infants Don't Develop At The Same Rate

You can check the infant for visual or hearing handicaps yourself. For instance, make a noise five to six feet from the baby. If a four- or five-month-old baby does not turn to look for the sound, she could have a hearing problem. Likewise, if a baby of this age is not able to follow a slow moving object with her eyes, perhaps there is a vision problem. However, here again you must be careful. Remember, you are not a doctor. Some premature babies or infants who are slow to develop may not respond to the hearing test yet. Also, research has shown that girl babies are more sensitive to sounds like loud noises and the human voice than are boy babies. Male infants show no more interest in familiar faces than in objects placed before them, whereas female infants seem more interested in the human face.

Avoid Labeling Babies

When the term "slow baby" is used, it refers to the infant whose slowness in relation to the average is very noticeable. Many babies at five months are able to lift their heads and chests high when lying on their stomachs and prop themselves on one or both elbows. By the seventh month at least 80 percent of all babies can do

this. Only the very slow babies still are unable to do it. But once again, the fault may not lie with the baby. Suppose the infant was not put on his tummy when younger. There would be no way, then, that he could have a chance to develop the muscles in his neck, head, arms and chest. If, on the other hand, you know the infant has had the chance to develop such skills, then special care and help may be needed. Just do not "jump the gun" and label a baby a slow learner or handicapped when you first notice a delay in his development. Through careful, close observations, you will learn to identify those babies who truly need special care.

Let The Center Director Know About Your Concerns

Whenever you observe and suspect a handicapping condition in a child, notify the director. Describe your observations and have the director observe the infant, too. The director will then make the decision as to whether the condition requires a parent conference or an opinion from a doctor, nurse or other specialist.

REALIZE HOW IMPORTANT YOU ARE

Let Parents Know About Their Infant's Daily Experiences

By now it probably has occurred to you that not just anyone can care for infants. It takes a very special kind of person. It takes a person who really understands a caregiver's role. A caregiver is not a substitute parent. The most important relationship in this world to a child is with his parents. A caregiver's proper role is to aim toward making the relationship between the parents and the child a better one. You do this by being concerned enough to tell parents the things they want and need to know about their child. You try to include them whenever you can in their infant's daily experiences at the center. This way they will not feel threatened by your closeness to their baby. So your job as caregiver has as much to do with making the parents happy and comfortable as it does in making baby feel good.

Encourage Each Infant With Patient Care

A caregiver should be warm, loving, patient and flexible. Above all, a caregiver must be understanding. Each baby must sense that she is warmly loved. The infant must be encouraged by the caregiver through talking, smiling, touching

and playing. Such encouragement, if not over-done, is what separates average from excellent infant care. Research suggests that quality of infant group care is critical. If the care is excellent, then the babies will develop very well.

Show Infants That You Enjoy Being With Them

A good caregiver is one who does not compare babies, but accepts each child for what he or she is. As a warm, loving person you let the infant know how much you enjoy being with him and how pleased you are with the things he does. If you are the kind who likes things done quickly, you will need to change your habits while around babies. Your movements will need to become slower. Babies - especially in the first few months - respond best to gentle, calm movements.

Try To Tune-In To Each Infant's Mood

Know your temperament and adjust to the baby's temperament. If you have a baby who likes to be active and into everything, then you can be more that way. If the baby is happiest when things are not so bustling or exciting, then you need to be less exciting, too. Tuning in to an infant's moods is very basic to providing good care. Often you set the baby's mood by your mood. If you are happy, the infant will take a hint from you and will more than likely be happy, too.

Be Observant And Consistent As You Work

An outstanding infant caregiver is observant. You listen to and respond to the needs of the babies in your care. You are consistent. You smile a lot. You cuddle and talk to babies while you are with them. You encourage and praise them for their efforts. You also encourage and praise the efforts of your fellow caregivers.

Accept The Fact That Infants Can Be Messy

If you are a perfectionist, you will have to be willing to accept less than perfection from the infants in your care. It is a wise caregiver who can admit that babies are naturally messy. It is an even more wise caregiver who admits it and can let babies be that way. It is best for parents to understand this, too. Especially as infants learn to feed themselves with their hands and during the crawling stage, they are going to get dirty and sticky. Hands, feet and clothes cannot help but get messy from time to time.

Relax And Have Fun While Caring For Infants

It is most important to be able to accept and work with the messy nature of babies. Even young babies can be made to feel uncomfortable if the adults around them cannot accept a certain amount of dirt on children. Babies cannot feel anything but frustrated if their play is interrupted constantly by adults who put too much emphasis on staying spotlessly clean. It spoils exploration for the infants and makes your job more difficult. You surely would clean a child before and after eating, before going to bed or after changing her diaper. An occasional check for sticky hands is fine, too, so that everything baby touches does not get sticky. But for the most part, relax and have fun as an infant caregiver. Remember, the best gift you can give an infant is your time, your caring and your love.

BUILDING SKILLS
IN GROUP CARE
FOR INFANTS

. . . Some Often Asked Questions
And
Situations To Explore

WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT CARING FOR INFANTS IN A GROUP?

When caring for groups of infants, you must be very alert and watchful. The very young infants need to be observed frequently even while sleeping. When caring for the older infants, watch for attempts to climb out of the crib. When babies are in the crawl area, watch for dangerous or broken toys. Be alert to larger infants bumping into or crawling into the smaller babies. It is best to divide the crawl space into areas and assign caregivers to each area. The youngest babies should have their needs met first. When they are hungry, they need to be fed quickly. They have small stomachs and are really experiencing pain when they are hungry. The older babies can wait for a longer time before eating. However, no child should be made to wait for an extended period of time to have his basic needs met. Make sure that you know how to care for infants. Understand their needs for food, sleep and play.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

You are temporarily alone in the infant section with five babies. Three of them have begun to cry. One is a nine week old who is very hungry. Another is an eight month old who is crying in the crawl area. A third is a four month old in her crib who begins to cry in sympathy with the other two. How would you respond?

A. Pick up the nine week old as you go to the crawl area to check on the eight month old. Comfort and give him a toy to play with. When he is all right, go to the four month old in the crib. Talk gently to her. Then feed the nine week old who you still have in your arms.

B. Go over to the eight month old. Comfort him with some cuddling and a toy. When he stops crying, go to the nine week old and pick him up. Then go to the four month old's crib and talk to her until she stops crying. Then feed the nine week old baby.

C. Make sure the eight-month-old infant is all right. Give him comfort and love. Then go to the four month old in her crib. Rock her crib and talk to her until she stops crying. Then pick up the nine week old and feed him.

Answers On Bottom
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You have been assigned to four babies. Merely by chance you have four very young infants ranging in age from six to nine weeks. Two of them are new to the center. Should you do anything about this?

A. No. There really is nothing you can do. Just hope that they don't all need feeding at the same time.

B. Yes. Ask other caregivers in the room with older infants to trade babies with you. That way you will not have so many tiny infants to care for.

C. Wait and see if more than one needs feeding at the same time. If not, everything will be fine. If so, then ask another caregiver to help.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is a good response. The nine week old will feel better when you pick him up. That can be done on your way to comfort the eight month old. The four month old has the least need and will be the most easily comforted when the other two are soothed. This choice meets the needs of the youngest baby first while meeting the needs of all three most quickly.

Choice B is not the best solution. You are not meeting the needs of the youngest baby soon enough. This action will end up taking longer to meet the needs of all three babies.

Choice C is least desirable. It will take the longest of all the choices to meet the needs of all three babies. The youngest baby and the eight month old have the greatest needs. Theirs should be met first. When these two have calmed down, the four month old will be easier to quiet.

Phyllis is a very large, active eleven month old. When she is in the crawl area, she tends to knock over other children and grabs toys away from them. She doesn't mean to hurt the others. Her size and active nature simply result in other children getting hurt. What should you do?

A. Put Phyllis in a playpen until she can be in the crawl area by herself. This way she will not hurt other children.

B. Allow Phyllis to be in the crawl area with other babies her size. The other children will learn to stay away from her.

C. Allow Phyllis to be in the crawl area with other children. However, be close at hand to help Phyllis play without hurting others.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not true. Something can be done. You could ask other caregivers to take over caring for one of the very young infants. This would make for better caregiving.

Choice B is most wise. You are taking action before a problem develops. It is in everyone's best interests if all adults present help care for the tiny babies.

Choice C is not sensible. Waiting for a problem to develop before taking action is not good planning. When possible, foresee problems and take action to prevent them.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the best solution. You are punishing Phyllis for something that is not her fault. She needs to be in the crawl area to develop fully. Playpens should not be used in place of the crawl area.

Choice B still is not the most desirable answer. The other children do need some protection from Phyllis.

Choice C is better. You are helping Phyllis and the other children. You can observe what is happening and keep Phyllis from hurting others. At the same time she will be getting the active play she needs.

HOW SHOULD YOU WORK WITH PARENTS OF INFANTS IN GROUP CARE?

In working with infants it is vital that you develop a good relationship with parents. You need information from them on their infant's habits and needs. They need information from you on what you see their child doing. You need to tell them about their baby's eating, sleeping and play habits during the day. Parents of infants may tend to feel guilty about leaving their child in child care, so try not to be critical. Let them know you really care about their child. Tell them the cute, funny and sweet things the child does. They may ask your advice about how to care for their child. Tell them what works for you. Don't say it is the *only* way to care for the child. Let them tell you about their feelings. If you support them and make them feel good about themselves as parents, they will support you and listen to you.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

Jimmy, who is seven weeks old, comes to the center about twice a week. Each time his mother brings a written schedule and special toys. She asks for a report of who cares for Jimmy throughout the day and how he behaves. She would like you to keep a special eye on her child. What do you tell her?

A. Tell Jimmy's mother how much you enjoy taking care of him. Reassure her that you will watch Jimmy carefully. Tell her you appreciate her bringing Jimmy's schedule.

B. Explain to Jimmy's mother that he will have to follow the center's schedule. Tell her with so many infants it would not be fair to give Jimmy special care.

C. Tell Jimmy's mother that it is impossible to give Jimmy all the special care she wants for him. Explain that if Jimmy needs one-to-one care she should talk to the director about a day care home or some other arrangement.

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Of Next Page

Nancy, who is four months old, comes to the center on a regular basis. She usually has a dirty, soiled diaper and wears dirty clothes. She needs a bath, also. The mother is quite young and this is her first baby. What would you do?

A. Tell the director. When the mother comes in, ask her to talk to the director because you are worried about Nancy.

B. Tell the mother to bathe Nancy before leaving home. Tell her the center cannot take babies who are dirty and whose clothes are not clean.

C. Bathe Nancy and put clean clothes on her. Tell the mother you know it is hard to get ready in the morning so perhaps bathing Nancy in the evening would work best.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is a good idea. You are reassuring Jimmy's mother that you really care for him. It is important to parents that their child get good care. The written schedule will help you know what Jimmy is used to. If followed as closely as possible, it will make your day and his go better.

Choice B is not the best response. You are not reassuring Jimmy's mother that you think he is special. Every parent wants the caregiver to think their child is special. What Jimmy's mother really wants is your reassurance that Jimmy will be all right at the center.

Choice C is not as acceptable. You are discouraging Jimmy's mother from bringing him to the center. You are making a problem for her and for the director. The mother needs reassurance that you will take good care of her son. It will upset her if you say you cannot care for him.

Bruce is 11 months old. He drinks well from a cup but his parents always bring his bottles as well as a cup. His mother says everytime he cries to give him a bottle because this makes him stop crying. What would you do?

A. Explain to the mother that it is not a good idea to give Bruce a bottle to comfort him. Tell her that since he drinks well from a cup he should never have a bottle again.

B. Tell the mother that when Bruce cries you pat his back, talk to him or cuddle him. Explain that he seems to be comforted by this.

C. Give Bruce a bottle whenever he cries. It is important to follow his parents' instructions exactly even if you don't agree with them and know they could be harmful to Bruce.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is going to worry the mother. It may make her unsure and maybe angry. This should be a last resort after you have tried other ways to make Nancy's mother aware of the problem.

Choice B will embarrass Nancy's mother. She may get upset and not bring Nancy back to the center. There are much better ways to handle this situation.

Choice C is the best solution. You are first trying to show her what to do, then very kindly offering her a way to solve the problem. You are not criticizing her but helping and teaching instead. However, if the mother continues to bring the child to the center in dirty clothes and in need of a bath, tell the director.

Kim is ten months old. Her mother dresses her in a frilly dress with leotards and black patent leather shoes. Kim is to eat lunch at the center while her mother goes shopping. While eating her lunch Kim spills her milk and vegetable soup drips on her dress. When her mother comes back, she is very angry about the dress. She says she will never bring Kim again and will tell her friends what poor care the center gives. What can you do?

A. Tell the mother that you put a bib on Kim. Explain that you are sorry about the accident. Suggest that play clothes are best for the center. Tell her you enjoyed caring for Kim.

B. Tell Kim's mother that when the babies play and eat at the center they do get dirty. Say that perhaps she should get a private babysitter for Kim if she wants her to stay clean.

C. Tell Kim's mother that she should complain to the director. Explain you are short of help and if she complains to the director perhaps more caregivers could be hired.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not wise. You are telling the mother she is wrong and what she should do with her child. Your advice has not been asked for. The mother may resent this.

Choice B is the best response because you are doing the best thing for Bruce. You also are helping his mother learn a better way to handle his crying. You are not telling her she is wrong. Rather you are suggesting another way to handle crying.

Choice C is not best for Bruce. You are not helping Bruce or his parents. Nothing is being done to help Bruce give up the bottle.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is the best solution. You are sympathizing with Kim's mother. You also are reassuring her you tried to protect the dress by putting a bib on Kim. She may calm down when you talk to her. If not, at least you have tried in a polite way.

Choice B solves nothing. You are not telling the mother what you did to protect the dress. Telling her to get a private babysitter does not solve the problem either.

Choice C is not fair. You are blaming the director for the problem. If you feel you do not have enough help, talk to the director. Do not complain to parents. This will not solve any problems.

HOW CAN YOU ENCOURAGE COOPERATION AMONG CAREGIVERS IN THE INFANT SECTION?

Infants can sense tension. So it is very important that the caregivers of infants cooperate with each other. Each caregiver should have assigned tasks to keep things running smoothly. A caregiver should have a small number of infants that she is in charge of. This does not mean that if your babies are doing fine, you can't help another caregiver whose babies may be fussy. Talk with each other about the way things should be run. Discuss what is necessary in order that babies be given good care. If you are often short of help, discuss it with the director. When there are problems between staff members, it is important to talk about the problems. If the people involved can't solve the problem, ask the head caregiver for help. If this doesn't work, then talk with the director. Bad feelings among caregivers cause poor caregiving for the infants. Remember, cooperate and communicate with each other.

WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

As a caregiver in the infant section, you become concerned because one of the other caregivers seems overly concerned about the babies getting dirty in the crawl area. She always is saying, "No, no" when a baby spills something. It really bothers her to change dirty diapers. She tells you she feels the babies should be kept in their cribs all the time so they don't get dirty. What can you do?

A. Tell the other caregiver that she should not be working in the infant room if she feels that way.

B. Tell the other caregiver that she should talk to the director about her feelings.

C. Remind her that babies do get dirty. Also, tell her that you don't like to change dirty diapers either. Suggest she talk to the head caregiver if she is unhappy.

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Of Next Page

You and three other caregivers are working with a group of infants. One doesn't seem to be doing his job. He doesn't go to a baby who is crying and doesn't change the babies. Unless he is told to do something, he just sits. It really bothers the rest of you. What should you do?

A. It is not your job to tell someone else what to do. Just ignore him and do your job. If it continues, report him to the director. Ask that this caregiver not be assigned to the infant section.

B. Talk with him about the duties in the infant section. Ask that he check the babies for wet diapers. Tell him to talk to and play with the babies. Say it is okay to hold and cuddle the babies.

C. Ask the head caregiver to talk to him. The rest of you could keep a list of times when he is just sitting, so the head caregiver will be aware of how upset you all are.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A is not the best idea. You are criticizing instead of helping her.

Choice B is not much better. Problems like this should be solved by the infant caregivers if at all possible.

Choice C is the best response. You are sympathizing with her problem and suggesting that perhaps the head caregiver can help.

Answers From Previous Page

Choice A will not solve the problem. You are not telling the other caregiver how you feel. Perhaps he is not sure of what to do and needs help. Reporting him to the director will only upset everyone.

Choice B is the best choice. You are giving him some ideas of what to do. You are being a friend and not judging his performance until you are sure he knows what is expected of him.

Choice C is not at all acceptable. Again, you are not trying to tell him how you feel. If he finds out you are keeping notes on him, he will be very upset and angry. This does not build good feelings among caregivers.

Here are some new situations with possible ways of handling them. Circle the answer you think is correct now that you have worked through this module. You can find out how much you have learned about your role as a caregiver in a child care center by comparing your answers with our answers (see page 192).

AS AN INFORMED CAREGIVER,
WHAT WOULD YOU
DO IF . . .

1. Sue Ellen is seven months olds. She is an only child and her parents are very protective of her. At the end of her first week in the center Sue Ellen's father tells you that he is not sure if the center is the best place for his daughter. He mentions that on one occasion Sue Ellen's diaper needed changing when he came to pick her up and that some of her food had not been opened. You know that Sue Ellen never went hungry and that her diapers were changed often. How should you respond to the father?

   A. Tell Sue Ellen's father that it has been a very busy week for everyone at the center. Explain that some weeks are like that but reassure him that you and the other caregivers have done the very best that you possibly could.

   B. Tell Sue Ellen's father that Sue Ellen has had a good first week. Explain that you check diapers often, yet a baby can be dry one moment and wet the next. Also, explain that Sue Ellen ate until she seemed full.

   C. Send the father to the director's office. Tell him to discuss his feelings and concerns with the center director. Most likely he is not going to want to hear anything you have to say anyway. You'd just be wasting your time.

2. Which statement below is not true?

   A. The unborn fetus can get the hiccups.

   B. The unborn fetus can suck its thumb.

   C. The unborn fetus can feel the hot sun or a cold wind.

3. Allison, who is two months old, has finished *all* her formula. She has been burped and changed and has fallen asleep in her crib. Shortly she wakes up fussing loudly. How can you help Allison?

   A. Burp her again and try rocking her back to sleep.

   B. Offer Allison some more formula because she still may be hungry.

   C. Give Allison a pacifier to suck until she falls asleep.

4. Choose the statement that best describes how the newborn infant might act.

   A. Loud noises or bright lights usually go unnoticed by the newborn.

   B. Diapers seldom need changing because a newborn eats very little.

   C. Moving objects attract a newborn's attention.

5. You and the other caregivers are in the middle of lunch. All the tiny infants have been fed and are now napping. You are busy feeding two older babies in high chairs. One wants another cheese stick and the other is busy pushing leftovers off his tray. Anna, a two month old, arrives with her mother. Anna is very fussy and is chewing her fists. What do you do next?

   A. Put Anna in her infant seat with her pacifier. When all the other babies are done with their lunch, then you will have time for Anna.

   B. Ask another caregiver to keep an eye on your babies for a moment. Warm Anna's bottle. Then feed Anna while you look after the others.

   C. Ask the mother to quickly feed Anna before she leaves. Tell her you can see Anna is very hungry and you are busy right now.

6. Six-month-old Leiloni is most often a cheerful, easy-going baby. In recent weeks she has been fussy. She has been refusing to take her bottle at times. Her shirts are frequently wet from drooling and she coughs once in a while. How can you help her?

   A. Recommend Leiloni be taken to see a doctor. It is obvious that she is not well.

   B. Since she shows the typical signs of teething, first check her mouth for swollen gums or a new tooth.

   C. First take Leiloni's temperature. A rise in temperature means she should see a doctor.

7. Five-month-old Shawn has a severe case of diaper rash. You have talked to his mother on several occasions but the rash seems to be getting worse. Shawn cries every time he wets his diaper. You have got to take some action. What would be the best thing for Shawn?

   A. Tell the director about the problem and how you have tried to handle it. Meanwhile, put salve, lotion or powder on his bottom to relieve his pain.

   B. Tell the director about the problem you are having with Shawn. Ask the director to talk to the parent. Meanwhile, continue to change Shawn's diapers often.

   C. Take the mother aside once more and tell her how concerned you are about Shawn's diaper rash. Suggest she try a new laundry soap or fabric softener.

8. Six-month-old Franz is an active, boisterous baby. He boldly tries his hand at anything he thinks he can do. Today you are feeding him with his spoon when he turns his face away, tight lipped. Each time you try to feed him he does the same thing. He grabs for the spoon and screams. How should you respond to Franz?

   A. Give Franz the spoon. Let him hold it if he wants. You can always feed him with another. If he is really hungry, he will eat from your spoon.

   B. Give Franz some finger foods because he is so eager to feed himself. Since he is not ready to handle a spoon by himself it is best he not have one.

   C. Remove the spoon and the food. Tell Franz that when he is ready to eat you will be more than happy to feed him, but not until. If he is hungry he will eat.

9. William's mother believes her seven-month-old son is ready to learn to use a cup. She has brought William's cup for you to give to him at the center. She says the only time William can have a bottle is when he goes to sleep. Yet you have found he does not need the bottle at these times. What should you do?

   A. Explain to the mother that you will have William play with the cup first for a while before asking him to drink from one. Also, tell her you have found William is perfectly willing to go to sleep without a bottle.

   B. Tell William's mother that you do not feel William should be forced to use a cup. Tell her William is not ready to use a cup. If she wants, have her try the cup routine at home. Then, if all goes well, you will be happy to try it at the center.

   C. Tell William's mother that the best way to get a child to drink from a cup is to get rid of the bottle once and for all. Out of sight, out of mind works well with babies. If they cannot see what they want, then the problem is solved.

10. Ten-month-old Holly has been coming to the center for two weeks. Her mother works part time, so Holly comes only two days a week. Every time her mother goes to leave, Holly starts to cry. Each time someone opens and closes the door, she starts up again. How can you help Holly?

    A. After two weeks Holly should be able to make it through the day without crying for her mother every time the door opens. The best thing you can do is to let her handle this matter in her own way.

    B. Holly is having an unusually difficult time in adjusting to the center. Talk to the mother. Suggest that Holly's mother rearrange her work hours.

    C. Arrange it so you can give Holly special attention when she arrives at the center. Comfort her when she cries. Get her involved in toys and games. Let her know you are there for her.

11. Juan is 11 months old. He has been busy for a very long while playing by himself in the crawl area stacking blocks and hiding them under other toys. You have enjoyed watching him from a distance. Now it is time for the babies to get ready for lunch. Later you think back on how much fun it was just to stand by and watch Juan play. Then it occurs to you that perhaps you could have done more to help Juan learn through his play. Which of the following ways might have worked best?

    A. What you did was best. Juan should have had that time away from others to be by himself. Babies need this, just like adults.

    B. You might have stood a little closer to Juan. Then without interfering you could have described out loud what he was doing.

    C. Juan would have learned most if you had joined him in his games. Use your free moments to play with the babies.

12. Hans is ten months old. When he was younger he used to suck his thumb, but he rarely does anymore. It is late in the day and everyone is anxious to go home. Hans is fussing and rubbing his eyes, but his father should be here any moment, so you do not want to put him in his crib. When Hans' father arrives, he becomes upset because Hans is in a corner by himself sucking his thumb. What should you do?

    A. Say, "Hans, take your thumb out of your mouth. Daddy is here to take you home. He doesn't want you to suck your thumb."

    B. Tell the father to ask Hans to stop sucking his thumb. This is the father's job since he is the one who is upset.

    C. Explain that a baby will sometimes turn to his thumb for comfort when tired, so it is best to ignore Hans' thumbsucking.

13. Inga is seven weeks old. Her mother has told you she has colic. She says Inga fusses most right after eating. How can you help relieve Inga's colic?

    A. Be sure Inga does not eat too fast. Burp her several times during a feeding.

    B. There is little you can do for a baby with colic. She will soon outgrow it.

    C. Put Inga in an infant swing. The constant rocking motion will help soothe her.

14. Kevin is ten months old and still takes a bottle of milk or juice to bed with him. His parents have apparently been disagreeing about whether Kevin is ready to give up his bottle. His father thinks he should, but his mother believes it is too early. They have come to you for your opinion. What should you say?

    A. Tell them that babies who take a bottle of milk or juice to bed often develop poor dental health or may become overweight. Suggest they consult their doctor or dentist for help. Meanwhile, recommend they replace the milk or juice with water.

    B. Do not get involved in this matter. This is something the two parents will have to work out for themselves. Explain that you do not feel it is your place to offer advice or give them any opinion whatever.

    C. Tell them the best way to handle this matter is to try taking Kevin's bottle from him at bedtime. Also, tell them you will not let him have his bottle at nap time. However, if Kevin gets upset, then give him back the bottle.

15. Thirteen-week-old Bonita has spit up and needs a bath. You know from past experience that not all babies like to take a bath. What is the best way to handle Bonita?

    A. Do not put Bonita in a tub of water. It is best to lay her on a towel and wash and rinse her with clean cloths and water.

    B. Rather than upset Bonita at all, simply keep her quiet until a parent can come to take her home.

    C. Test the water for the right temperature. Put a clean towel in the bottom of the tub so Bonita does not slide around.

16. Matt, almost a year, and Joyce, eight months old, are playing near each other in the crawl area. Joyce has been playing with some plastic rings until Matt takes them from her. Joyce cries and crawls over to you. What should you do?

    A. Offer Joyce some comfort. Hold her and talk gently to her. Try to interest her in another toy.

    B. Take Joyce back and sit her down again. Then get the rings from Matt and give them back to Joyce.

    C. Put Joyce in her high chair. Give her some finger foods to take her mind off the rings.

17. Andrea is nine weeks old. What is the best way to hold her for bottle feeding?

    A. Hold Andrea in your lap in a sitting position. This way she is less likely to choke.

    B. Cradle Andrea in your arm, her head slightly higher than her feet.

    C. Put Andrea in her infant seat where she will have maximum safety.

18. Gregory is four months old. You have been holding him on your lap playing with him. Suddenly, a baby near you begins to cry. She has pinched her finger and needs to be comforted. Where would be the best place to put Gregory while you attend to the other baby?

    A. Put Gregory in his infant seat.

    B. Sit Gregory in a high chair.

    C. Use the playpen close at hand.

19. Eleven-month-old Ryan has been crawling all around the room grabbing and throwing toys. Once he accidently hit a child with one but she did not cry. You have asked Ryan to come to you but he just smiles and crawls away. What should you say to Ryan?

    A. "Ryan, you are a silly boy. I'm going to come and catch you and tickle you all over."

    B. "Ryan, you hit the baby. Be a good boy and give the baby a nice love."

    C. "Ryan, look at this big, green ball. Come, let's go play with the ball."

20. Yolanda is three-and-a-half months old. She has been coming to the center since she was six weeks, so you know her quite well. One thing you have noticed is that she often spits up. Lately she has been spitting up more than before. What should you do?

A. The older an infant gets the more she can be expected to spit up, especially if she has always done this.

B. Yolanda may be sick. Even if she has no fever, you should alert the parents.

C. Give Yolanda less formula and more warm water whenever she eats. This will help.

OUR ANSWERS

1. B
2. C
3. A
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. A
9. A
10. C
11. B
12. C
13. A
14. A
15. A
16. A
17. B
18. C
19. C
20. B

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